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New Statesman

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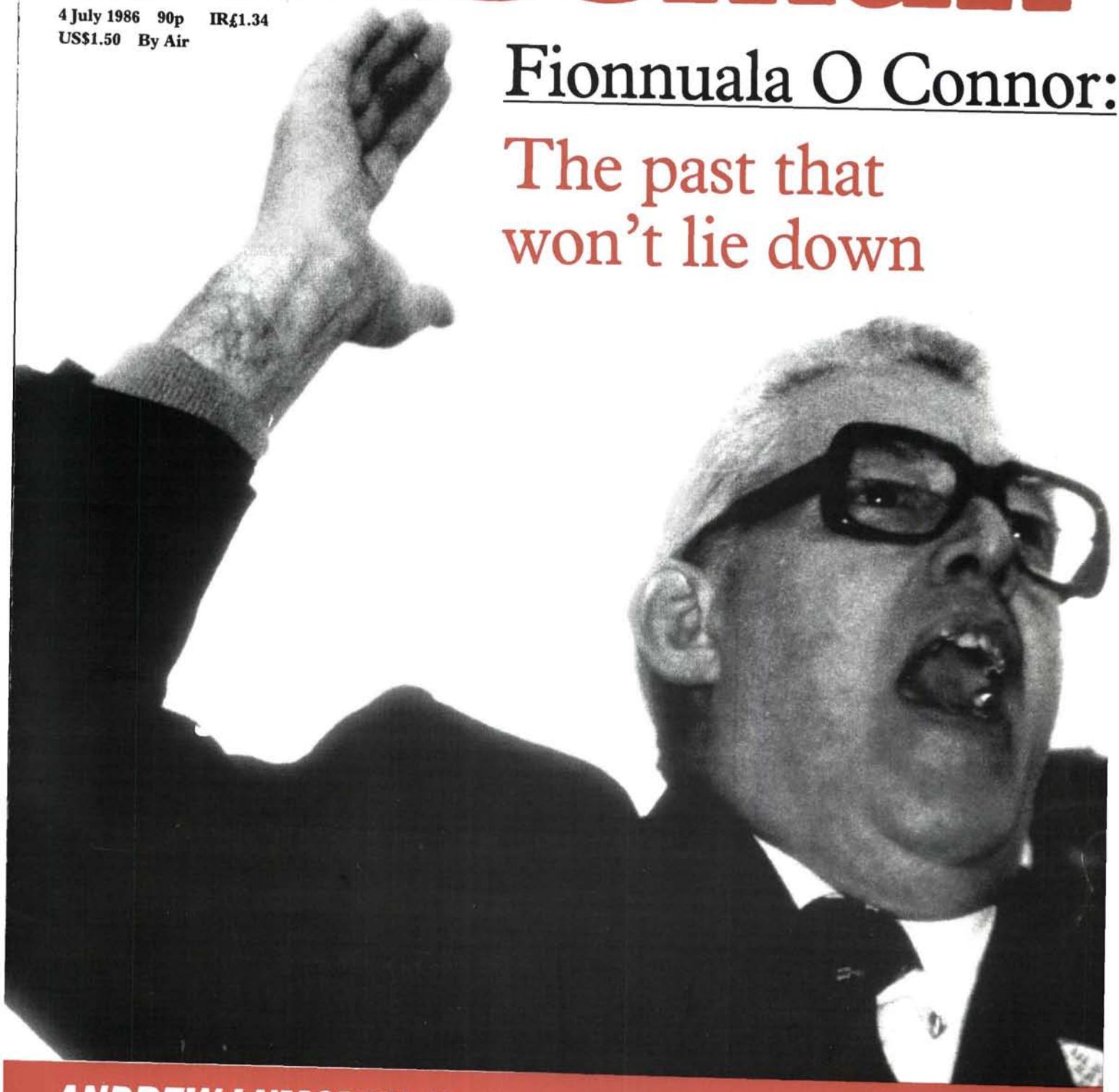
SHORT STORY
Adèle Geras

Fionnuala O Connor:

The past that won't lie down



ANDREW LUMSDEN: How Customs tripped over the law
SARAH BENTON: Anti-apartheid takes off
PETER HILLMORE: Glued to the box

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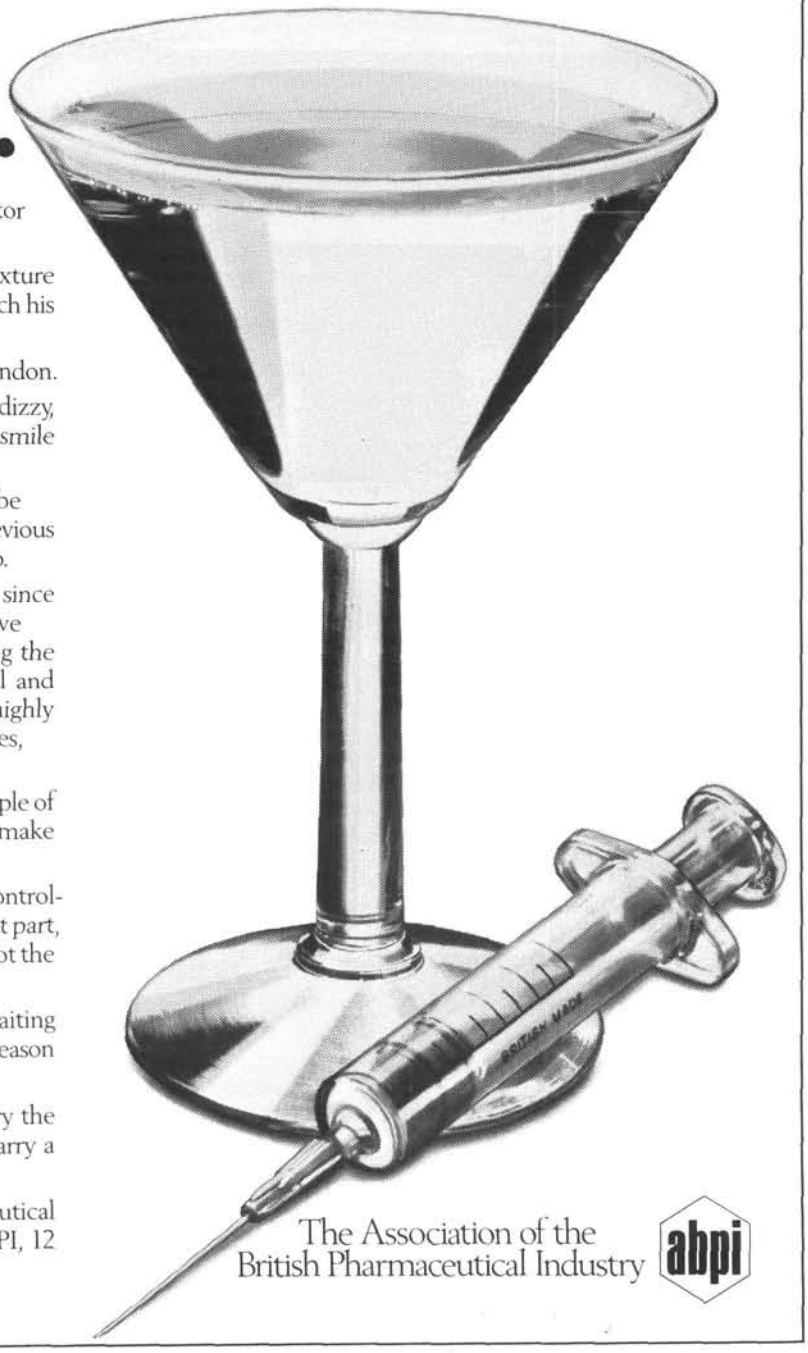
How a doctor got drunk and saved thousands of lives.



Thankfully, Dr. Borel was a much better doctor than he was a cocktail mixer.

His most famous concoction was in fact a mixture of pure alcohol, detergent, water and a medicine which his research team had discovered called Cyclosporin.

A mixture he threw down with alarming abandon.

Needless to say this potion made him rather dizzy, but a blood sample taken some time later made him smile for quite another reason.

For he had proven that Cyclosporin could be absorbed by the human body. Something which previous tests with less interesting cocktails had failed to do.

This new medicine (now reformulated) has since helped save the lives of thousands of people who have received organ transplants by dramatically reducing the risk of rejection. Together with improved medical and surgical techniques it's made transplant surgery a highly successful method of treating life threatening illnesses, such as kidney failure.

But better control of rejection is only one example of the ways pharmaceutical research has helped to make transplant surgery a successful reality.

Anaesthetics, antibiotics and medicines for controlling virus and fungal infections also play an important part, although new medicines and surgical skills are still not the only vital ingredients.

In Britain last year, well over 1,000 of those waiting for a kidney transplant were unable to have one. The reason for this was a shortage of donor organs.

If the pharmaceutical industry is going to carry the responsibility of research, the least you can do is carry a donor card.

To find out more about the British Pharmaceutical Industry, please write to: Dr. John Griffin, The ABPI, 12 Whitehall, London SW1A 2DY.

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry

abpi

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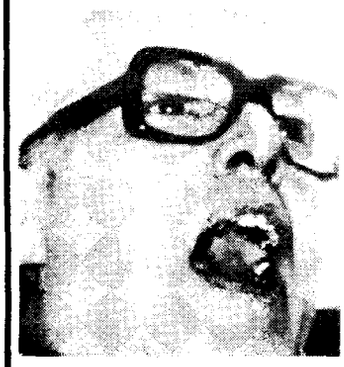

Cover photo: Camera Press

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Alas, poor Peacock, She knew him well

AS WE GO to press, the Peacock report into the future of the BBC has been leaked but not published. Those leaks, though, have all the hallmarks of a proper government 'rubbishing job' in advance.

It is another example of a Thatcher 'job' gone wrong — as more and more of them *are* going wrong these days. In the olden days, when there was general agreement that a major British institution had come off the rails and was in need of restructuring or reform, a Royal Commission (or at least a departmental enquiry) would be set up and in due course report. Its membership, at least by establishment lights, would be quite widely drawn. The ensuing report would represent, when the exercise worked well, at least a coherent view of a way forward. In some cases (Beveridge on the welfare state) something would then happen. In others (Franks on the Official Secrets Act) nothing happened. But most reports had an intellectual authority and integrity of their own, capable of holding up for some years to come.

This, though, was not Thatcherism's way with the BBC. Given almost universal agreement that the BBC has for some time lost its way, internally and externally, a Royal Commission taking time over its findings was obviously the right course. But it was unattractive to a Prime Minister in a hurry.

Instead, we got a hand-chosen lot of doctrinaire free marketeers, chaired by a Thatcherite groupie economist and diluted with the odd Social Democrat, whose clear remit was to declare in ringing terms that what was needed was the introduction of market forces to the BBC, plus the aphrodisiac of advertising. All of this was supposed to go through in double quick time to produce a report that would allow Poodle Brittan at the Home Office to put through the necessary changes in time for the next election — winning plaudits from those who might vote Tory and who prefer ads to higher licence fees and from the advertising industry and all who sail with it.

But the best laid plans of mice and women 'gang aft a-gley'. Peacock and his band of Adam Smithians had held scarcely more than a meeting or two before it became clear that *no one* was in favour of the BBC taking advertising. The BBC was against. ITV1 and Channel Four were against. Commercial Radio was against. Even Saatchi & Saatchi and all their friends were not really in favour. But Peacock and Co., having been set up to find a Right-Thinking-Persons answer to the reform of the BBC's finances, could hardly cop out at that early stage and announce that advertising on the BBC would be a bad thing; that this meant in effect going on with the

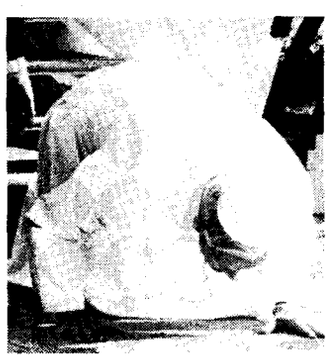
NEXT WEEK

PUBESCENT STRIPS

ROZ KAVENEY watches as US comics struggle to grow up

TILL DEATH US DO PART

NELL McCAFFERTY casts a pained eye over the forces in Ireland that see a dissolute society in the dissolution of marriage



SORRY . . .

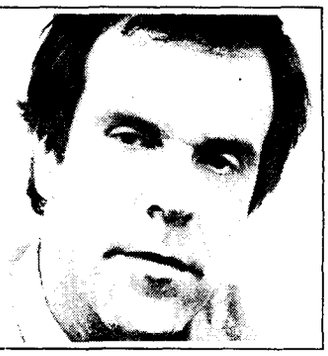
You can go on holiday this week (ignorance is bliss). JAMES CASTLE's critique of forward-facing seats and other aspects of aeroplane safety has been held over until next week

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS

Fay Weldon's new novel, *The Shrapnel Academy*, concerns the clash between staff and guests at a Home Counties military academy: ADRIANNE BLUE reviews

New Editor for *NS*

John Lloyd (right) was chosen last week by the Board of Directors to succeed Hugh Stephenson as Editor of the *New Statesman*. Lloyd, 40, is Industrial Editor of the *Financial Times* and was Journalist of the Year in 1985. He takes up the appointment on 1 August.



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despised BBC licence fee system; and that 'there was no alternative'. It would have been a re-run of the fiasco of Maggie's determination to abolish domestic rates. Peacock would never be asked to No. 10 again, nor to chair another committee, nor to rise up to the House of Lords to join Lord Beloff and Baroness Cox.

So Peacock decided to exceed his brief. He went beyond advertising and finance, about which there was now nothing of any interest to say, and looked at the structure of the BBC and of broadcasting as a whole. Here he seems to have been considering a whole series of wacky proposals about selling off Radios 1 and 2 and putting ITV franchises out to the highest bidder, none of which address themselves centrally to the future of broadcasting, particularly TV, in this country and none of which offer Mrs Thatcher her way out of the supposedly unpopular licence system.

Poor Peacock, in short, has been remaindered even before he has been published. But the real bankruptcy lies with this government. For at a time when there is more rapid development of the technology of broad and 'narrow' casting by radio and TV, the government is in effect declaring that it is so disorganised internally and so riven by alternative ideologies that it cannot produce even a sensible set of recommended discussion proposals this year. The technology of the industry is galloping ahead — cable, satellite and the rest — in other countries. In the UK we are drifting without direction in a way that damages both what is put out and the information technology industry that might be being led by it.

It is symbolic, also, that in the week of Peacock the new Home Secretary Hurd has been forced in Cabinet committee to cancel even Poodle Brittan's cheap and reasonably imaginative proposals for a network of new community radio stations. The explanation is that the government fears that the majority of the output would have an anti-Tory bias. That does begin to sound like a government getting really badly rattled. □

South Bank robbery?

PETER HALL as Martyr to the Faith is not the most credible casting.

In this week's *Sunday Times*, along with the RSC's Trevor Nunn, Hall was attacked for profiteering from his position as director of a subsidised theatre: by using it as a seedbed for plays which, their commercial viability established, have proceeded, with Hall as a shareholder, to West End, Broadway, even cinema success. The NT's boss has responded with bellows of pain: presenting himself as the crucified victim of forces determined to silence his many outspoken defences of subsidy.

But a man who can protest that his £720,000 profit from the merchandising of the NT's production of Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* has resulted in nothing more extravagant that the purchase of a *small* house in Chelsea is not about to reduce us to tears of pity. Nor, we suspect, will he so affect an NT staff once so sour about wages that it threatened to close the theatre with a strike.

All the same, the villains of Hall's script — a right-wing press in the pocket, he implies, of a right-wing, anti-subsidy government — do have a plausible feel to them. The theme of the *Sunday Times* article — wild goings-on on the tax-payer's money — was familiar from attacks in other right-wing papers on, for example, the GLC: another institution which the government was keen to kill. 'Amassed a fortune', 'wild promiscuity' were some of the phrases employed.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of Hall's particular case might be, the hypocrisy of turning it into an attack on subsidy is massive. The whole *Amadeus* story — and those of such other commercial successes as *Equus* and *Les Miserables* — is the almost inevitable result of current government arts policy: one by which subsidised establishments are encouraged, by any number of means, to venture out into the marketplace. As Arts Minister Richard Luce said in March this year: 'The government offers partnership for the enterprising, not featherbedding for the passive.'

Hall has certainly been enterprising. And not entirely on his own account. The NT has received £1.2m. from the profits that *Amadeus* made on its giddy progress from theatre to screen — and, if it wasn't as large as it hoped, its helpless collusion in the whole process can only be laid at the government's door. Any cash rainbow must seem worth chasing when, as recently as last year, the Cottesloe stage was forced to close (until rescued by GLC money) for want of sufficient government funding.

And this ill-considered, chaotic mixed economy is having a far more dangerous result than that of possibly making wealthy a few state-subsidised entrepreneurs. As future commercial viability becomes important when commissioning plays, the market begins to impose its tastes — tastes which, at best, are cautious and homogenising; at worst, mind-numbingly banal — on what should be a plural and adventurous theatre.

As Benedict Nightingale asked in these pages (*NS* 20/27 Dec. 1985): 'Isn't it disturbing that Ayckbourn, Shaffer, Simon should more or less sum up the Olivier and Lyttelton's contemporary contribution in 1985-6? Should our most important subsidised theatre really be presenting the kind of mainstream work that would have any commercial impresario reaching for the phone?'

The answer to this question is, in the long run, far more important than the business manners of Messrs Hall and Nunn. □

The buck stops here

Many apologies to readers who didn't receive Anti-Apartheid stickers in last week's issue of the *NS*. This was due to production problems and not, as some have suggested, to guerrilla action during distribution.

Sheets of stickers are now available to readers who write to us or call at 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. One sheet (containing 6 stickers) per reader, please.

MAJOR NEW PRODUCTION

PARIS 1794. WHO WILL CONTROL THE FRENCH REVOLUTION?
DANTON, ROBESPIERRE OR THE GUILLOTINE?

The DANTON Affair

RSC

BARBICAN THEATRE
REDUCED PRICE PERFS
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A new play by PAM GEMS
from a stage chronicle by STANISLAWA PRZYBYSZEWSKA
translated by BOLESLAW TABORSKI

Arts Council Funded

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NEWS

THIS WEEK the private world of freemasonry, with its knuckle-fondling handshakes, apron-girded worthies and spine-tingling oaths, is throwing open its doors to the press and media in an attempt to improve its 'unfortunate image'. The Duke of Kent will open an exhibition of masonic memorabilia at Freemasons Hall in Covent Garden. Exhibits will include the Sussex plate, a priceless 2,020 ounce silver table centre piece made in 1838 and three enormous 'throne' chairs, built for the Grand Mastership of the then Prince of Wales in 1791.

The display of some of the masonic riches is part of a new public relations strategy by the Craft, reacting to increasing media concern (eg *NS* 2 May and 23 May) over its activities. (Even the *Tatler*, the posh person's monthly, is bringing out a masonic special issue.) The hierarchy of the Brotherhood has removed the traditional and rather quaint blood-curdling oaths that masonic initiates had to swear. In pursuit of a good image the Craft has even appointed a public relations consultant, John Cole-Morgan, to woo sceptical journalists. Cole-Morgan, himself a freemason, says that freemasonry is a force for good, giving decent chaps the opportunity to enjoy the grace and beauty of the masonic rituals and a moral imperative of 'Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.'

Camera Press

Gotcha! Freemasons Lord Mais, Sir Kenneth Cork, Sir Alan Traill and Sir Robert Bellinger, all former Lord Mayors of London

THE MONIED 'BROTHERHOOD'

AS THE 'BIG BANG' approaches, the City of London has taken some steps towards appearing open, honest and as sweet-smelling as a posy. Yet there is one influential nexus in the country's financial centre which is secret, answerable to no-one, but hostile to independent inquiry: freemasonry. No-one should underestimate the financial pulling power of Britain's 800,000 or so freemasons. We name the top 30 of the Brotherhood in the City. JOHN SWEENEY reports

There can be no question that 'brotherly love' is fulsome within the small coterie of businessmen who appoint each other Lord Mayor of London. In the last quarter century, 16 of the annually-appointed Lord Mayors of London have been sufficiently senior masons to have been included in the 'black book' — the Masonic Year Book which lists the names of 5,000 senior masons and the 7,461 English lodges where they meet.

The influence of the masons in the City would concern any visitor to the exhibition if he or she had a copy of the 'black book', a *Who's Who* and the time to make the connections. The yearbook is full of fascinating nuggets. *New Statesman* readers who fancy their chances of a cosy overdraft arrangement with say, the National Westminster Bank, could do worse than join the bank's Lodge, Number 3647. There is a similar Lodge for Lloyds Bank, known as the Black Horse of Lombard Street, number 4155.

For expansive entrepreneurs who are really serious about getting into debt, why not join the Bank of England Lodge, number 263, which meets at Freemasons Hall on the second Thursday of most months? Readers who are interested in the insurance business would be well advised to team up with the Lloyd's Lodge, number 5673, which will next conduct its business at the Tower Rooms, Tower Place, on 8 October. The catch is that you have to be male and you have to be asked.

Using the black book, we name 30 lucky individuals — all male, white and upper class — who have made it to the top in the City and not found being a mason a hindrance. ●

Masonic Lord Mayors of London:

1959-60: Sir Edmund V. M. Stockdale Bt, former deputy principal, Bank of England
1960-61: Sir Bernard N. Waley-Cohen Bt, dir. Lloyds Bank, 1962-84
1961-62: Sir Frederick A. Hoare Bt, managing partner, C. Hoare & Co.
1962-63: Sir Ralph E. Perring Bt, chm Perrings Furnishings, 1948-81
1966-67: Sir Robert I. Bellinger GBE, governor BBC 1968-71
1967-68: Sir Gilbert S. Inglefield GBE TD DL
1968-69: Sir Charles Trinder GBE
1970-71: Sir Peter M. Studd GBE KCVO
1972-73: Lord Mais GBE ERD TD DL, dir. Royal Bank of Scotland -'81
1973-74: Sir Hugh W. L. Wontner GBE CVO chairman Claridge's and Berkeley Hotels since 1948, director Savoy
1974-75: Sir Murray Foxe, GBE, chairman Trehaven Trust Group
1975-76: Sir Lindsay R Ring GBE
1977-78: Sir Peter Vanneck, GBE CB AFC AE DL MEP (Conservative) for Cleveland and Yorkshire North
1978-79: Sir Kenneth R. Cork GBE, senior partner, Cork Gully, chartered accountants 1980-83, member Arts Council
1979-80: Sir Peter D. H. Gadsden GBE, chairman Private Patients Plan
1984-85: Sir Alan Towers Traill GBE, chairman, Lyon Holdings.

Other senior masons in the City include:

Sir Leonard Barford, Commissioner of Inland Revenue 1970-73
Lord Cornwallis, director Town and Country Building Society
Mr Registrar Timothy L. Dewhurst MC, registrar of the High Court in Justice in Bankruptcy
Lord Farnham, chairman of Brown, Shipley and Co, merchant bankers
Lord Kenyon, director Lloyds Bank; chairman National Portrait Gallery
Sir Cecil G. Mant CBE, consultant to Corporation of London 1972-83
Sir John Newson-Smith Bt DL, member of HM Commission of Lieutenancy for City of London
Sir Kenneth Newton Bt OBE TD, general commissioner for income tax
William D. Pattinson, Inland Revenue 1965-68, HM Treasury 1968-70
Bruno L. Schroder, director Schroder Merchant Bankers
Lord Sherfield GCB GCMG DL, chancellor Reading University
Marquess Townsend, chairman Anglia Television
Sir John Welch, director John Fairfax & Sons, publishers of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Spectator*

Council scoreboard

15 May

Torfaen DC	LAB GAIN (Ind)
Torfaen DC	Lab hold
Slough DC	Lab hold
Christchurch DC	Lab hold
Torridge DC	Lib hold
Northampton DC	Con hold

22 May

Aberconwy DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Somerset CC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Mid Suffolk DC	Con hold
Dorset CC	Con hold

29 May

Tendring DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
Sedgefield DC	Lab hold

5 June

Broxtowe DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Gedling DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Alnwick DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Plymouth DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Mid Glamorgan CC	SDP GAIN (Lab)
Gedling DC	Con hold

12 June

Castle Point DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Harborough DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Glyndwyr DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
North Wilts DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
North Yorks CC	Lab hold
Oldham DC	Lab hold
Falkirk DC	Lab hold
Herts CC	Con hold
Berwick DC	Con hold
South Ribble DC	Con hold

19 June

Lincoln DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Wyre Forest DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Surrey CC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Tandridge DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Mole Valley DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
Stockton DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Avon CC	CON GAIN (Lab)
Lincs CC	Lab hold
Essex CC	Lab hold
Basildon DC	Lab hold
Kettering DC	Lab hold
Bridgnorth DC	Lib hold
Bridgnorth DC	Ind hold
Bridgnorth DC	Ind hold
Avon CC	Con hold
Chiltern DC	Con hold
Chiltern DC	Con hold
Sutton LBC	3 Con holds
Aberdeen DC	Con hold

26 June

Lichfield DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Sefton DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Hounslow LBC	Lab hold
Nithsdale DC	Lab hold
North Tyneside DC	Lab hold

See ***Peter Kellner*** *p9 for commentary*

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THE SHAKING OF CUSTOMS & EXCISE

WIN OR LOSE before the jury, Customs & Excise faced a public relations disaster, at a time when it is pleading for extra resources to combat hard drugs, had it proceeded with the prosecution of Gay's the Word bookshop set to open at the Old Bailey on 6 October but cancelled last Friday, 27 June. Richard du Cann QC leading for the defence and his 'juniors', including Ann Mallaleiu and Geoffrey Robertson were set to arouse maximum publicity about a waste of existing resources; contradictory law; and over-weening application of statutory power. The legal expertise has been NCCL's and those whom it instructed. The *exposé* was the product of two years' relentless determination by the nine defendants and their constituency of lesbians and gay men around the country. ANDREW LUMSDEN dissects a triumph for the 'plural society'

GENERATIONS of innocuous persons who sought to bring foreign-published works into this country but were prevented by Customs saw border censorship's come-uppance this week after 110 years. Take, out of history, F R Leavis, forbidden a single copy of the Paris edition of *Ulysses* in the 1920s; or Radclyffe Hall, her *The Well of Loneliness* prohibited by Customs in 1928 — yet a BBC *Book at Bedtime* by 1974.

Customs censorship as a laughing-stock — *viz* when it detained Agatha Christie's *A Pocket Full of Rye* in the 1950s on suspicion that it was 'agricultural propaganda' after author's proofs had been sent her for correction in Iraq — turned sour in April 1984.

After years of intermittently treating projected imports of books and magazines for specifically lesbian and/or gay male outlets as if they were self-evidently in the same league as brutal, misogynistic or simply witless 'hard porn', Customs raided Gay's the Word community bookshop in London's Bloomsbury and homes of some of its directors.

Some 2000 volumes, comprising 142 titles and including works by Genet, Kate Millet, Edmund White, Tennessee Williams and Allen Ginsburg (much of it previously published in UK editions, with no attempted interference under the 1959 Obscene Publications Acts) were detained as presumptively 'indecent or obscene'.

In November 1984 eight directors, one staff member, and a supplier in America *in absentia* were charged with conspiring to evade the prohibition on imports of indecent or obscene material imposed by Section 42 of the 1876 Customs Consolidation Act.

Committal proceedings before London magistrate C. J. Bourke in late June-early July 1985 resulted in the defendants being sent forward for the full jury trial that was to have begun this 6 October. At 10.20am last Friday defendants learned that Customs had decided to 'compound' — that is, use its statutory power to strike a bargain. The bargain freed of legal terminology is:

1. No prosecution. All books but 19 to be released back into Gay's the Word's hands

2. The 19 which Customs persists in regarding as probably infringing Section 42 to be returned to the supplier in America

3. Gay's the Word, after notifying Customs, to re-import with impunity any or all of the 19, for testing as to their indecency or obscenity before a magistrate

4. Agreement by Gay's the Word not to make any claims for costs against the Commissioners of Customs & Excise

The key points to note are that last Friday, for the first time, Customs agreed to presume innocent intention *and offer consultation* to a would-be books importer, contenting itself with leaving the upshot to the courts. And that Customs is not (*our point 5*) going to expose itself to any suit for damages, despite the financial and other distress its actions over two years (1984-86) have manifestly caused — and over which it has effectively though not legally admitted being in error.

This escape scot-free by a major department of state, consented to *force majeure* by the British bookshop under assault, is no light matter. Before assessing what it means it is worth noting an accusation of 'apparently imbecile insensitivity' which was made against Customs only three weeks ago in the letters page of *The Times* (12 June) by a citizen in an entirely different field to books and magazines importing.

H. N. Best, manager of 'two speciality metals businesses, one of which has twice won a Queen's award for export achievement', used the phrase in a bitter complaint against the 'delays', failures to make 'apology for error', and power 'so great that many people are reluctant to complain for fear of reprisals' of Customs & Excise.

The April 1984 raid on Gay's the Word bookshop and directors' homes was made under the 'Writ of Assistance'. Granted once in each reign, this frees Customs from any obligation to consult a magistrate or judge before entering private premises and/or removing records. It dates from medieval practise.

No reimbursement

Irrecoverable 'fines' have been levied in effect, though by no court ruling, as a direct consequence of the Customs operations against Gay's the Word:

- £250,000 — on the shop's past record, well-founded estimate of turnover lost by Gay's the Word over 1984-86 through loss of American imports now declared to be almost entirely admissible. Move to larger premises stopped. Actual turnover on last audited accounts: £120,000. To Gay's the Word's loss of (non-profit-distributing) business may be added sales lost by other and smaller lesbian/gay outlets, whose imports were also stopped.
- £53,000 — funds volunteered by lesbians and gay men, publishers, and certain authors (eg £1000 from Gore Vidal) for campaigning against Customs censorship. Some £20,000 remains in trust, against anticipated expenses from re-importing and taking before magistrates' courts the 19 titles that Customs required on 27 June should be returned to America
- £200,000 — necessarily uninformed but estimated cost to the general public, made up as to approximately £100,000 in legal bills for both sides including legal aid, and a further £100,000 of wages and salaries within Customs & Excise: calculated on a deduction that 36 officers worked half their hours on activities connected with Gay's the Word for one month, and four officers worked a third of their hours for some two years.

What stopped Customs?

Magistrate Bourke, during committal proceedings in June-July 1985, agreed to view 'sexually explicit' heterosexual material freely obtainable from newsagents for purposes of comparison with the imported lesbian/gay material Customs was seeking to condemn. This was not binding on a higher court, but gave warning to Customs that 'discrimination' would be a central issue at the Old Bailey.

As early as November 1984 John Wheeler, senior Conservative MP in London, protested at the apparent waste of Customs resources on the Gay's the Word case. This salvo was reinforced from another direction in May 1985 when Customs officers belonging to the SCPS (Society of Civil & Public Servants) voiced alarm that Customs powers needed for 'serious crime' might be jeopardised by misapplication for 'literary censorship'.

The discrepancy between the modernised obscenity legislation of the Obscene Publications Act 1959, which carefully provides for defences of literary or other merit, and the Victorian Customs law governing imports, which does not, was raised by Lord Hutchinson in the House of Lords in January 1985; and again by Chris Smith MP in his 10-minute rule bill of this Wednesday 2 July; and by Customs officers themselves, who asked at SCPS conference in May 1985 for the 'archaic' discrepancy to be ended.

The final straw for Customs' case came from Europe. In an otherwise spectacularly inappropriate judgement about female rubber dolls, the European Court in Luxembourg ruled (11 March 1986) that under EEC trade rules 'a member state may not rely upon public morality to prohibit the importation of goods from other member states when its legislation contains no prohibition on the manufacture or marketing of the same goods on its own territory' (Case 121/85).

Customs admitted on 27 June that though Gay's the Word's had been American imports, 'it would be inequitable and impracticable not to apply the same standards to all imports'. Precisely so. ●

Capital Gay

Well-wishers bearing champagne flocked to the bookshop last Friday

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BROADWATER FARM INQUIRY

Next week: Gifford verdict on the 'Tottenham riots'

THE GIFFORD ENQUIRY into last October's 'Tottenham riots' on the predominantly Black Broadwater Farm housing estate in north London releases its report next Monday, 7 July. Set up by the Home Office and chaired by Lord Gifford, evidence taken by the enquiry since February includes submissions from a wide range of organisations on and around the Farm, and from various local council departments.

A key contribution in the eyes of the local community will have been accounts of police operations on the estate since 6 October collected by Haringey council police unit and Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign. Since the risings and pitched battle on the estate on 6 October, when a policeman lost his life, the Farm has experienced saturation policing, with raids (involving on occasion members of the DII firearms unit) a daily occurrence, according to information given the Defence Campaign.

Raids are alleged to have taken place with or without the occupants being present, leaving homes damaged, members of the family arrested and personal belongings taken away by police for investigation. One family reported opening its door to find itself surrounded by police pointing high-powered rifles. A young woman reported an incident in which a rifle poked through her bathroom window as she was washing. Arrests on and around the estate ran at 15-20 a week after the 'riot', usually accompanied by allegations of violence and intimidation by police.

A resident reported seeing a video equipped police vehicle moving around the Farm while many others have reported interference on their telephones. All milk and postal deliveries to the Farm were temporarily stopped by the police on the grounds that they would 'impede' the murder inquiry. Haringey police unit was told that the Fraud Squad have been investigating financial matters relating to the Youth Association, the Defence Campaign and various community groups on and around the estate.

The treatment of 'suspects' in detention has yielded further allegations of intimidatory tactics. Detainees, including juveniles, have been denied access to solicitors, family and friends and social workers. Police maintained that certain solicitors chosen by defendents were 'interfering' with the administration of justice. Most of those arrested remained in custody for up to 50 hours without legal advice. Sleep and washing were denied to many, and clothes removed for forensic tests and not returned. One woman reported to the Defence Campaign that she had been stripped-searched.

Almost all of those held by police were subjected to lengthy interrogation sessions, resulting in one instance in a 50-page 'confession' by a youth who denies having been anywhere near the Farm on the night of 6 October, and who was subsequently released by the courts for lack of evidence.

Recently, however, policing of the Farm appears to have moved into a different phase. Arrests in connection with the uprising have slackened to about 1-2 a month. But

Beverley Scott, whose family has been 'targeted' by the police, protesting outside Highbury Magistrates Court

there has been an increase in arrests for other offences, such as possession of drugs and various vehicle-related offences. A substantial proportion of the arrests made are, in fact, re-arrests of people already arrested and/or charged in connection with 6 October. Those taken in are still questioned about the events of the 6th and in particular about PC Blakelock's death.

The total of Broadwater Farm related arrests has now reached the huge figure of 360, of whom 160 have been charged — leading to a presumption by many that police are operating a dual tactic of harrassment and collation of information. 75 of these are facing heavy sentences on charges of murder, riot or affray.

To mark next Monday's publication of the Gifford Enquiry findings, the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign will picket Tottenham Police Station on Tuesday 8 July, 6-8pm. A demonstration to protest at 'continuing police violence and harrassment experienced by those on and around the Farm, has been set for 20 July, 12 noon, underneath Tangmere, BWF Estate, Willan Road, N17.

Jude Lanchin

For further details, contact BWF Defence Campaign, 01-885 3752.

MISCELLANY

As the government stands shoulder to shoulder with apartheid, we turn to matters down the road

Veritas

El Vino's Fleet St wine bar became famous a few years ago for its sexist treatment of Anna Coote, formerly of the *New Statesman*. Last week *NS* contributor Wiseman Khuzwayo turned up at El Vino's in Blackfriars with two friends and was refused service because his jacket was 'too casual'. An onlooker said he'd had the same problem the week before, but had been offered a jacket from behind the bar. This too was refused, and this time the bar person said it was because Wiseman was wearing corduroys. A journalist on the *Independent*, wearing corduroys too and standing next to Wiseman, had just been served, but to protests the bar person said he was 'not obliged' to justify or defend his decision. Wiseman, who is Black, was born and brought up in South Africa.

It must be a spoof

The prizes for the Green Party's September Draw raffle include 'a one year Guardian *subscription', a 'weekend residential course at the Centre for Alternative Technology' and 'four native tree saplings'. We are also invited to a Green picnic party on Hackney Marshes. 'Bring your mouth organ/penny whistle/guitar . . . behind the ice rink on Leabridge Road, across the football pitches, and you should see us, sitting in the beautiful meadow.' Be there or be* square.

Wave power

The government's third defeat in the House of Lords on the Social Security Bill confirms the 'wave theory' of the aristo vote. The Tories can only win close votes in the Other Place after 4.30pm. The crunch division on a Labour amendment to allow appeals against DHSS decisions took place at 4.17pm on Monday. The government was defeated by 16 votes, including those of Tories Baroness Faithfull and Olga Maitland's dad Lord Lauderdale. But after 4.30 Tory ermine pours out of the City and along the District Line. At 5.11pm the Liberal Lord Banks forced a vote to make payments out of the new Social Fund grants rather than loans. But it was too late. 14 extra City types swung the balance.

Joys of Stats

How many people on the pilot 'Restart' schemes found jobs, employment minister Kenneth Clarke was asked on Radio 4's Today *programme this week. 'About 300,' he replied. Yes, but how many* exactly? *Here we can help: out of the 19,112 long-term unemployed called for interview on the schemes that this week extend to the whole country, 217 were placed in jobs. That's a 1 per cent success rate. Restart is linked to the new 'Jobstart' scheme, which pays £20 a week to persuade those unemployed for a year to take jobs at less than £80 a week, and whose precursor, the Young Workers Scheme, paid employers £15 a week to take on 17-year-olds at less than £50 p/w. Unpublished Employment Department figures obtained by the Low Pay Unit show that 8 out of 10 YWS jobs would have existed anyway without any subsidy.*

A joke too far

A new travel book out this week *USSR: From an original idea by Karl Marx* reveals that admiration for Melvyn Bragg knows no bounds in the Soviet Union. Bragg has attained the status of a folk hero, revered as the true descendant of Dickens in his unstinting depiction of the horrors that afflict the average Englishperson. But Faber and Faber felt that one joke at his expense, an entry in the bibliography *'Better dead than read: an assessment of the literary career of Mr. Bragg'*, went too far. Without wishing any ill on distinguished and hard-working former *NS* director M. Bragg, those of you wanting the unexpurgated version should send your censored copy plus sae to authors Polonsky and Taylor C/o Faber and Faber, Queens Sq, London WC1, where they will add back in the missing words.

Collecting the goodies

Aladdin's cave time at the Collection Can. Sell out on building firm Redland and realise a comfortable 6 per cent. Our tip for this week: sell out of Woolies and buy Dixons if, as seems probable, Dixons lose the bid battle. And now some gossip. There appears to be a storm brewing at stockbrokers Quilter Goodison, home of Chair of the Stock Exchange, Sir Nicholas Goodison, with much umbrage and a possible recourse to the courts over recent managerial departures.

Reptile

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WALDEGRAVE? AS WET AS AN (ACID) RAINY DAY

WILLIAM Waldegrave, junior environment minister, is winning flattering headlines and making influential friends. Journalists find him witty and articulate, environmentalists a sympathetic listener. This week, writes PETER GILLMAN, he faces his sternest test

ON TUESDAY, Britain began its six-month stint in the presidency of the European Council of Ministers. As president of the council of environment ministers, Waldegrave will confront the problem of acid rain, an issue on which Britain is virtually isolated in Europe.

In Sweden and Norway, thousands of lakes have lost their fish; half of West Germany's trees are damaged. Two main pollutants have been identified: sulphur dioxide, much of it from power stations, and nitrogen oxide, from power stations and motor exhausts. Britain emits more sulphur dioxide than any other country in Western Europe, and in West Germany and Norway the damage it causes is a big political issue.

There are powerful forces in Britain resisting change, led by the Central Electricity Generating Board under its formidable chairperson Lord Marshall. The position adoped by the CEGB over sulphur dioxide emissions from its power stations is akin to that of other public miscreants, such as tobacco manufacturers and asbestos producers, who have been found out: 'this is a very complex problem, we are not the only ones to blame, much more research is needed . . .'

The CEGB claims it would cost £2,000 million to cut pollution from power stations, raising electricity prices by 5 per cent (figures vigorously contested by the Greens). The CEGB's lavish propaganda campaign includes a video which so enraged the Norwegians that they despatched seven officials to London to refute its claims.

The CEGB says for example that 'only one sixth' of sulphur-related pollution falling on Norway comes from Britain; true, but that still makes Britain the largest contributor to Norway's problem, and in south-west Norway, where the lakes and rivers are worst affected, Britain's contribution rises to one third. The director general of Norway's environment ministry called the video 'obsolete and dangerous' and even the British DoE said it contained a 'selective account of the scientific arguments'.

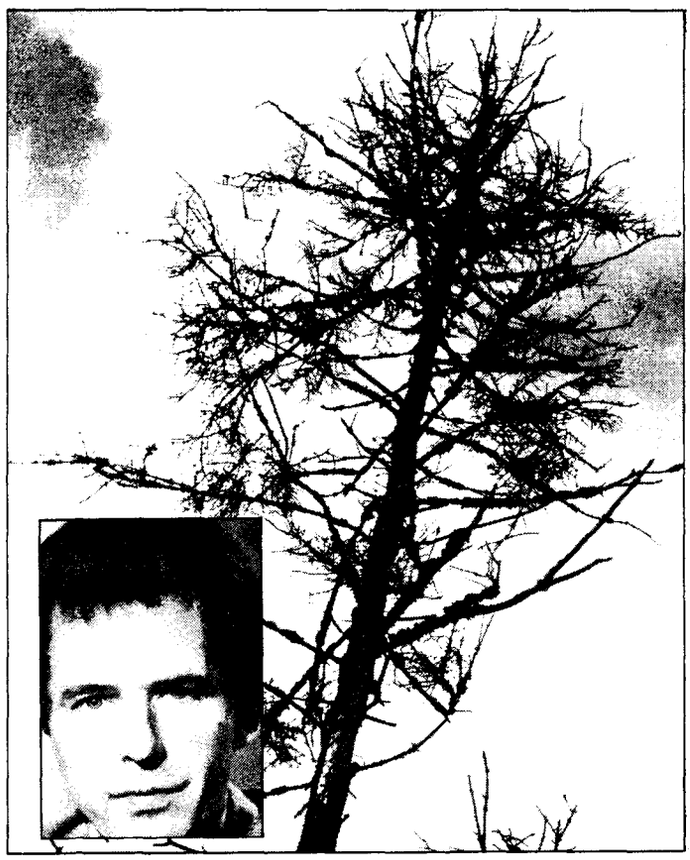
Until now, however, the CEGB and its government allies, energy minister Peter Walker, the Treasury and Mrs Thatcher, have held sway. Recent episodes are less than encouraging.

Last year, the Department of the Environment pushed for Britain to join the '30 per cent club'. With our Scandinavian ambassadors reporting caustically on the political damage Britain was suffering, the Foreign Office concurred, and the news was leaked that we were likely to sign.

The matter was to be decided at a Cabinet committee, with Sir Geoffrey Howe supposedly the main advocate of signing. Howe didn't turn up, leaving the field clear for Norman Tebbit, then industry minister, who'd just had an argument with the Department of Environment over vehicle exhaust emissions. The plan was turned down; exit the Department of Environment, humiliated, leaving Britain without a policy (other than that of having no policy).

But British and European Greens were expecting support from Waldegrave when they lobbied him over acid rain last month, as he had publicly acknowledged the extent of the problem. They were dismayed when Waldegrave echoed the CEGB's line, arguing that there was little that could or should be done, and that since Britain planned to switch to nuclear power, the problem would eventually go away.

Post-Chernobyl, the Greens found that an unpalatable argument.



Friends of the Earth

Camera Press

Which is greener? (a) acid rain damaged Norwegian spruce (b) William Waldegrave

How Green is our ally?

The meeting of the European environment ministers followed on 12 June. The outgoing president, Dutch minister Peter Winsemius, had spent his six-month term trying to construct a compromise on power station emissions that Britain could agree to. Under his proposals, Britain (along with Italy) was asked to agree to a reduction of not 60 but 40 per cent.

Britain still had no policy — and the replacement of Waldegrave's boss, Kenneth Baker, by Nicholas Ridley as Secretary of State for the Environment had further confused the issue. A *deus ex machina* arrived in the shape of European environment commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis, who overturned the Dutch proposals because he said they didn't go far enough. (The Greens are divided as to whether this was ineptitude on Davis's part, or Machiavellian spoiling.)

To restore his credibility, Waldegrave has to persuade the Cabinet that Britain should join the '30 per cent club', and then reactivate the 40 per cent proposal in Europe and fight for Britain to accept it by the end of the year.

In the council there will be lobbying on Britain from West Germany, Denmark, and Holland; as well as from Norway, which Mrs Thatcher is to visit this autumn. There will be further pressure from Britain's Greens, who are assiduously forging alliances with the landowning and sporting wings of the Tory party.

Friends of the Earth is mounting a new tree campaign this week and there have been some forceful recommendations from the House of Commons Environment Committee, chaired by Tory Sir Hugh Rossi, that Britain should stop procrastinating.

These pressures will help Waldegrave, who the Greens still regard as sympathetic to their cause, if he decides to renew the struggle with his government colleagues. But the defensive position he's already adopted, together with stalling noises — 'we need more data' — suggest that he's already prepared a fall-back position: to survive the next six months in Europe as gracefully as possible and then pass on the problem to his successor. ●

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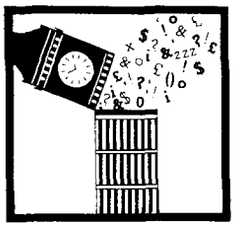

Bomb row: local voters have not punished the Alliance — yet

MAYBE OUR new editor will shield me from some of you. Until then there are times when I must admit I can stand no more. For weeks the pressure has been intense. Angry letters; anonymous phone-calls; anxious ministers button-holing me at Westminster: at any moment, what with the heatwave and all, I have been fearing a lynchmob of *NS* subscribers in the street, baying for blood. All right, I surrender. You can have your way. Here are the latest council by-election figures.

During the weeks leading up to 8 May there were few by-elections and they were highly unrepresentative. A spate of by-elections on 8 May was overshadowed by the same day's general council elections. Again, after 8 May it was mostly quiet on the voting front. Not until June did things really hot up. The analysis here covers the seven weeks to the end of June; almost three quarters of the votes were cast during the past three weeks, following the eruption of the row between David Steel and David Owen on defence.

From mid-May to the end of June, 54 by-elections were held; 37 of these were three-cornered contests in which more than 75,000 votes were cast. The Conservatives had a narrow overall lead over the Liberal/SDP Alliance, with Labour third:

Conservative	26,145	34.5%
Liberal/SDP	25,372	33.5%
Labour	22,085	29.1%
Others	2,196	2.9%

As ever, the raw figures should be handled with care. Almost twice as many votes were cast in wards being defended by the Conservatives as being defended by Labour. A rough adjustment for this would put Labour in the mid-30s, and the Tories and the Alliance at about 30 per cent each.

The broad story of Labour holding its own while the Alliance continue to make gains, mainly at the expense of the Conservatives, is confirmed by the gains and losses table:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Con	29	15	1	15
Lab	17	3	5	19
Lib	2	0	11	13
SDP	0	0	5	5
Others	6	4	0	2

However the figures are carved up, the dominant fact is that local by-elections continue to disclose a three-way split in voting behaviour at variance from recent opinion polls. This week's MORI survey in the *London Standard* reports Labour (40 per cent) with almost twice as much support as the Alliance (23 per cent). Yet when people face the actual decision of going to a polling station to choose a local councillor, many of them behave differently than when a pollster asks them a hypothetical question about the next general election.

It is a phenomenon that we have noticed before in our local scoreboard series. Just as in parliamentary by-elections, the Alliance does better in sporadic local contests than in either nationwide polls or nationwide elections. (On 8 May the Alliance's share of the poll in the 'general' local elections was up only 1 point on its share in the same places in June 1983; in West Derbyshire, on the other hand, the Liberals increased their share by 12 points and in Ryedale by 20 points.)

THE RULE OF thumb is that the Alliance 'overperforms' in council by-elections by

PETER KELLNER

about five points, most of that advantage being gained at the expense of whichever of the major parties is nationally in the lead. At the moment, Labour is in the lead nationally, so it is Labour that is 'underperforming' in by-elections. An average of recent opinion polls put Labour at 40 per cent, the Tories at 34 and the Alliance at 24. These figures are consistent with local by-election figures that put all three in the 30-35 point range.

Except for one thing. While the Alliance generally draws its extra local votes away from the party that is nationally in the lead, it does not always do so. On the last two occasions when Labour rose in public support, the effect was transmitted directly into local votes, without being greatly diluted by any by-election effect. The first occasion was last October, following Kinnock's Bournemouth speeches in which he attacked Militant and Arthur Scargill; the second was four months ago, following the National Executive's decision to start expulsion proceedings against members of Militant in Liverpool.

What is different this time? The most obvious point is that Labour's national lead today is not the result of intensive anti-Militant publicity. Partly it reflects the gradual advance of Labour as the party improves its general image ('freedom and fairness' — that sort of thing), and partly a switch of anti-Tory allegiances as the two Davids knock hell out of each other over defence.

What the local voting figures suggest is that this second component of Labour's advance is not reflected in by-elections. And, it might be argued, why should it? What the Alliance candidate for the Little Thistlethwaite-on-the-Marsh thinks about Polaris has no relevance to the future of Britain's defence policy. As long as she can persuade voters that she will fight for local services, she is likely to do well.

Yet voters' views of the parties are seldom that clear-cut. Normally, national events affect voters' general images of each party, and those images inform local as well as national votes. Labour did well in local elections last October and in early March because Kinnock's stand on Militant improved the party's overall reputation for competence and decency, not because the good citizens of Happytown-by-the-Wye suddenly saw the prospect of a purge of local Trots.

THE RESILIENCE of the Alliance's local support in the wake of the Owen-Steel row, suggests that the image of divisions between the Liberals and the SDP has not yet hardened into an indelible picture. In some ways that is obviously good news for the Alliance. If Steel and Owen can find a way of agreeing on what happens when Polaris rusts into its grave, there is no reason why the Alliance should not recover to around 30 per cent at the next general election.

But the other side of the same coin is that the downside potential of the defence row has not yet been realised. If the Liberal and SDP conferences in two months' time amplify the differences, and fix each party into a position from which it will have difficulty dealing with the other, then the Alliance's support could well fall further, and have great difficulty recovering.

An early test of the Alliance's capacity to appear united under fire is this month's parliamentary by-election at Newcastle-under-Lyme. Alan Thomas, the Liberal candidate, is a unilateralist on the radical fringe of his own party. He holds the kind of views on defence that Owen was only too pleased to leave behind when he left the Labour Party.

In normal circumstances, Thomas ought to do well at Newcastle. Although he came third in 1983, 15 points behind the second-place Tory, Alliance candidates won more votes than Tory candidates in Newcastle both in last year's shire county elections and this year's district elections. This May's figures for the wards that make up the constituency were: Labour 50 per cent, Liberal/SDP 29, Conservative 21.

A 'normal' by-election result on 17 July would be Labour 45 per cent, Liberal 35, Conservative 20. If the Liberals fail to reach 30 per cent — worse, if Thomas comes third — then the downside of the Alliance defence row will no longer belong to the realms of the potential; it will be a reality. □

See p5 for Council Scoreboard

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That wouldn't be a *17th century* dog collar, would it?

Derek Speirs/Report

BIGOTRY — PROD, ROMAN AND OURS

FIONNUALA O CONNOR points out — more in anger than in sorrow — that it was 'us' (on the 'mainland') who created the Frankenstein monster of the Northern Ireland problem in the first place

BELFAST HAS a new Lord Mayor. He is young, working-class, unemployed. He hates wearing ties and, when he appeared on television in open-necked shirt with hair curling over his collar, supporters of his party leader phoned headquarters to complain. Among party workers his nickname is Red Sammy.

So far, so good, you might say. An ideal figure-head for a city with pockets of 60 to 70 per cent unemployment, certainly far less offensive than the pompous burghers who've by and large filled the post over the past century and dedicated their year in office to securing a knighthood to go with their loot.

Sammy Wilson, however, was until his elevation press officer of the Democratic Unionist Party. His leader is the Reverend Ian Paisley and the supporters who phoned to complain that he looked scruffy on TV were members of Mr Paisley's Free Presbyterian church. Oh yes, and what he was doing on screen was calling the Royal Ulster Constabulary 'bootboys'.

Not out of class distaste for the enforcers of the status quo, you understand, but because the police had been laying into *his* people — Protestants, that is, although the police are Protestants themselves. Conduct likely to lead to a breach of the peace — and it did. For all that they live in Protestant areas and depend on Protestants to support them, the RUC had the nerve to stop their own friends and relatives and neighbours parading through Catholic areas, beating drums and shouting anti-Catholic slogans, you see.

Or perhaps you don't. Every so often it becomes clear that what people find hardest to grasp — still, after all these years — is why politics in Northern Ireland don't fit into any Left/Right pattern. Nor into any neat imperialist/anti-imperialist conflict either, despite the best efforts of the doctrinaire, who like their conflicts pre-packaged. Indeed, people on the 'mainland', apparently, (mainland of what?), find something surreal in the battles Mr Paisley fights out, given the massive socio-economic problems facing Northern Ireland. Surreal — or anachronistic. Like something out of the seventeenth century, in fact.

Well, there's room for amazement. There was Mr Paisley yet again bellowing 'apocalypse now' in the middle of the night. Big bulky preacher dumped on the steps outside, as the Assembly, the third talking-shop at Stormont in 12 years, folded under him. The Protestants of Ulster would not tolerate it . . . this was civil war. Even allowing for an individual's hyperbole, this was no doubt difficult for the outsider to understand.

I THINK WHAT we have here is a cultural impasse, a language difficulty. Amounting one might almost say to alienation, except that's become a discredited word in Northern Ireland through over-use in this post-Anglo-Irish Agreement period.

We're supposed to speak the same language in these two islands, but we don't. When Mr Paisley says 'Protestant', which he does very often, that's what he means. Not *Protestant*, as in pagan, secular England with its figure-head Protestant Queen. *Protestant*, as in Reformation. *Protestant*, as in martyr. *Protestant* as in seventeenth century.

And when Mr Paisley says 'Catholic', which again he does very often though always with the prefix 'Roman' for that extra chill, be means Savonarola. Blood, guts, Inquisition. The kind of religion that allowed of no other way to get to Heaven.

The kind that is alive and well and living in the the Republic of Ireland, in fact, inquisitorial in spirit if no longer possessed of the trappings, just down the road and across an ill-marked border from Belfast. An ideology which has just scarified a 98 per cent of Catholic people into a two to one vote against the introduction of divorce. (Which Mr Paisley does not believe in either, but I

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wouldn't want to confuse anyone further at this point.)

The best polling station posters read 'God says No'. God, it goes without saying, is a Catholic God. Roman Catholic. So this seventeenth century business is not confined to Northern Ireland politics, right? This is an all-Ireland phenomenon. No Left/Right divide, but central, dogmatic and mutually exclusive and decidedly conservative brands of Christianity. The practice, or at least the profession, of which is regarded as a proud badge of identity.

North of the Border, a majority, who sometimes call themselves British, sometimes Unionist, but who actually seem to care most about their Protestantism: versus a minority who write Irish on their passports, describe themselves as Nationalist, look to the Republic for protection, and are Catholic. Currently looking glumly southwards at their co-religionists' little exhibition of breath-taking intolerance over divorce and thinking how much mileage Mr Paisley and friends will get out of this one.

BUT TO GET back to Lord Major Sammy Wilson. Sammy held a party in the grounds of the City Hall last Thursday night, because that's late-night shopping in the city centre, and invited everyone. Bands, crisps and lemonade, games for the kids.

The idea was to reach more people than he could invite to his formal installation dinner the next night. There he made a speech saying it had been suggested he would be Lord Major for one section of the community only. 'I have no intention of being an anti-Catholic Lord Mayor', he insisted, to ghostly laughter from absent Catholics.

Being the first citizen would not make him any less a Unionist, he added hastily. 'As a Unionist I am pledged to do all I can to bring down the Anglo-Irish agreement — not just for the benefit of one section of the Belfast population, but for everyone in the city.'

More language problems. Unionists have this way of speaking for 'the people of Ulster' and attributing to this homogeneous grouping Unionist sentiments for every occasion. As in 'Ulster says No'. It never fails to gall. Belfast Catholics did not flock to the free party at the City Hall, not just because Lord Majors have never had anything to do with them, but because it would have been unthinkable to drink Sammy's lemonade under that brazen banner, still flying across the dome of the city's civic centre, despite a judge's ruling, erected at the will of the council's permanent Unionist majority and maintained against all the opposition could do, to inform the world that 'Belfast Says NO.'

Sammy Wilson would of course profess some kind of Left politics in any normal society. He'd vote Labour if he lived on the 'mainland', he'd be an active trade unionist — and his Protestantism would be a private business. He wouldn't need to parade it, nor to assure the people round him that he wasn't anti-Catholic. Because he wouldn't find himself speaking so often with the nagging edge of insecurity, as his party speaks, and loudest of all his leader, for 'the Ulster people, the Protestant people of Ulster.'

He does not live in a country, however, with agreed political institutions. He lives in Northern Ireland and sees himself as a direct descendant of those Protestant settlers from England and Scotland who ploughed neglected Ulster fields — that's right, in the seventeenth century. Sammy comes from working-class East Belfast, where even the privileged and exclusively Protestant shipyard workers have felt the pinch of unemployment for years now. He might never have considered being anything but a Unionist, but it was Mr Paisley's populist DUP he joined, not the more middle-class Official Unionists — whom he does not like, nor they like him. Nonetheless they're all in this together.

He's the first DUP Lord Mayor — sign of the extreme times. And in fact he doesn't fit the mould for his own establishment: separated from this wife, the party foisted Mr Paisley's councillor-daughter on him as chaperone/Lady Mayoress. Even in his victory speech, in the middle of the anti-Anglo-Irish Agreement rhetoric, he found time to mention Belfast's crushing social problems.

The Agreement takes precedence, however, over any 'normal' political instinct, because it is interpreted as the blueprint for a British goodbye, the 'constitutional' issue to end them all, the last in the series of crises of identity which have plagued Ireland for 300 years.

Ireland has no normal politics, North or South. The Republic's system is no more appropriate to the 1980s than Northern divisions — but it's every bit as explicable. Partition dictated the course of southern politics, the development of southern political parties, as it froze Northern Ireland's sectarian divide in the seventeeth century. The border was the classic colonial stratagem, with classic results: conflict, territorial insecurity, perpetual identity problems. Who did it? You, folks, you who now have such difficulty understanding our quaint anachronistic ways.

Not that we shall fit with exactness any longer into any neat post-colonial scenario. The settlers are long since rooted, the empire decayed, and the Brits clearly aching to be gone.

Yes, that was irritation back there. It crosses all the divides, the impatience with the tone of unconscious British superiority. So intolerant, the Irish, not like us, so mired in their ancestral quarrels, their wretched seventeenth century religion. And obsessed with their history, aren't they? But it's your history too — except we have to live in it.

POLITICS OF ACTIVISM

ANTI-APARTHEID TAKES OFF

The wave of solidarity with Black South Africa is more than 'the protest flavour of the month' (*Sunday Telegraph*). How much more? asks SARAH BENTON

IT'S POSSIBLE that in a few years one of the most common place names in Britain will be that of a 68 year old Black South African, whose face virtually no one here has ever seen, whose voice no one has heard. Student halls, a recreation ground in Leicester, an art gallery in Camden, a housing estate in Hackney are a few of the places to be called after Nelson Mandela. It is hard to think of any other political figure who could have inspired a pop song in his honour, a song which bound the crowd of young people at Clapham Common last Saturday in an emotional high as the bands led the way into 'Free Nelson Mandela'. Only national liberation movements now produce heroes in a country long disillusioned with its political leaders.

The growth of support for anti-apartheid in the last two years has been, everyone agrees, phenomenal. We can't keep up with the applications, says Hanif Bhamjee of Wales Anti-Apartheid. Where we once drew ten people, we now can't pack everyone into the room, reports Tyneside AA. National membership of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) has grown from 2,500 individual members (those who join nationally through head office) in 1983 to 7,000 today, and from 40 local groups to over 150. Sales of AA News have increased from 16,000 in January to 21,000 six months later.

The turning point for an organisation which has kept up a small and steady presence since its foundation in 1959 was President P. W. Botha's visit to Britain in 1984. It's not clear exactly what Margaret Thatcher thought she was doing with her invitation: perhaps some defiant display of solidarity that would reassure British investors and white South Africans alike that Botha's apartheid was their most stable protection. That anyway was precisely the point she made: an assertion of the link between apartheid and the racism and capitalism which live so snugly in Britain. It galvanised a massive demonstration.

Yet those figures of support for the AAM are not an accurate measure of the popular anger, the passion to 'do something' which activists, black and white, report from all round the country. But at a similar point in its transition from being a small beleagured lobby to being a mass movement, CND was already counting its members in tens of thousands. More significantly, its grass roots membership was changing the very nature of political involvement in Britain.

Mike Terry, executive secretary of AAM, thinks the comparison is based on an illusion. He offers two reasons. Nuclear disarmament touches everyone's life, touches some simple

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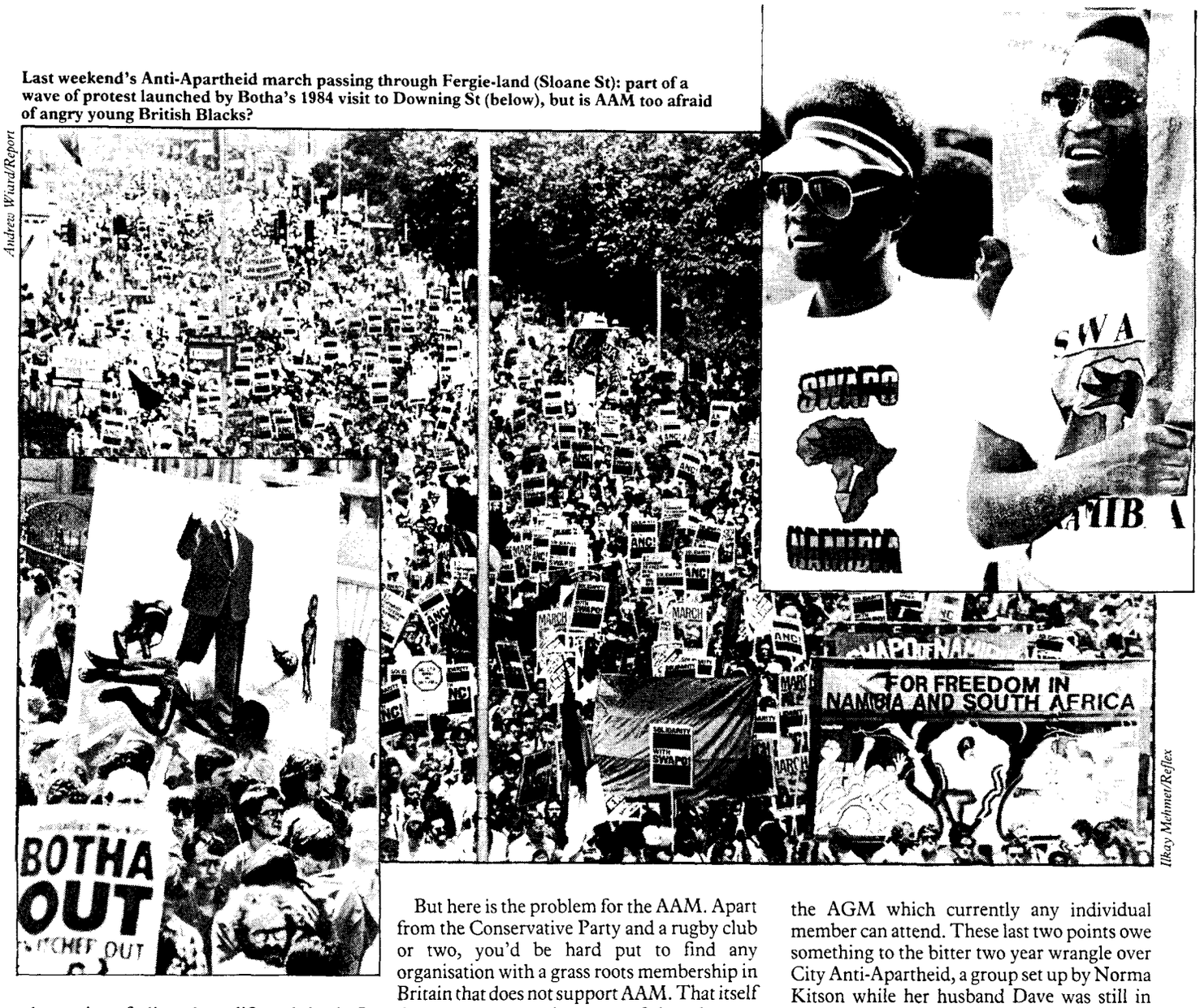
Last weekend's Anti-Apartheid march passing through Fergie-land (Sloane St): part of a wave of protest launched by Botha's 1984 visit to Downing St (below), but is AAM too afraid of angry young British Blacks?



Andrew Ward/Report

Ilkay Mehmet/Reflex

subconscious feeling about life and death. In contrast, AAM makes a tougher political demand on its supporters: they must support a policy of total sanctions against South Africa, and they must work in solidarity with South Africa's liberation movement. Inevitably, that means supporting armed struggle. His second reason was that CND got much more media coverage than did AAM.

But it was CND's dramatic actions and its professional press office which forced the name of the organisation onto a media busier looking for Moscow gold and KGB agents than a voice for radical disarmers.

It is also true that CND was very disarming, though as men of integrity the difference between AAM's Bishop Trever Huddleston and CND's Mgr Bruce Kent is as thin as a priest's cassock. Still, supporters of the liberation movement in South Africa are not going to be children of peace and light, able to proselytise the life-enhancing qualities of peace, niceness and harmony with nature.

Yet what AAM has to lose in terms of support from white middle class people it certainly has to gain in potential support from the young Black community. And not just them. As Harif Bhamjee pointed out, national liberation may have no resonance in the hinterlands of England (unless it's fearsome images of ungrateful communist terrorists); but it does in Wales where proportionately support for AAM is much higher.

But here is the problem for the AAM. Apart from the Conservative Party and a rugby club or two, you'd be hard put to find any organisation with a grass roots membership in Britain that does not support AAM. That itself does not create the sort of broad mass movement which it is committed to building and which supporters long to see. So why do we not yet have it?

The answer, as usual, is both organisational and political. For a start, AAM has a unique security problem. Within two months of moving into new premises in a narrow London back street ('Mandela Street: Formerly called Selous Street' says the street sign), their offices were burgled. All their records and files were stolen. Everyone assumes it was BOSS, the South African secret police. In July 1985, a few days before a State of Emergency was declared in South Africa, their offices were set alight. If it hadn't been for some early morning cleaners sounding the alarm, their work would have been devastated.

Already those premises, once spacious, are too cramped for the ten full-time staff. They plan to move. But the work of the staff, based on AAM's various constituencies (women, trade unions etc — but not Blacks) forces the staff to scurry around feeding those constituencies with material. It does not allow the time or direction to carry out the functions of a national leadership, such as research (crucial with a policy like sanctions) or press and publicity. All these are being discussed by the AAM's Executive Committee which is preparing plans for change.

Those will include new guidelines for the work of local groups and a new structure for the AGM which currently any individual member can attend. These last two points owe something to the bitter two year wrangle over City Anti-Apartheid, a group set up by Norma Kitson while her husband Dave was still in prison in South Africa. It has organised pickets and vigils outside the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square more or less continuously over the last few years (winning on the way an important legal decision confirming its right to picket on the pavement). It was disaffiliated last December.

The resolution to expel them was passed by 671 votes to 276. But while many of their opponents saw no room for doubt about the decision ('they were a pain in the arse', 'abusive', 'sectarian', 'arrogant' were some of the comments) others who supported the disaffiliation were doubtful.

City AA's downfall was the involvement of the Revolutionary Communist Group, a breakaway from the Socialist Workers Party, which was wholly insistent on the correctness of its own analysis (which included vocal hostility to the ANC) and its compulsion to recruit for its own ranks. Yet there is no more chance of keeping far Left groups away from avowedly broad political movements than there is of keeping wasps away from a jam jar: and their whirrings and stings can help fertilise and galvanise a movement.

What made this struggle particularly bitter was that City AA's picket did stake out a potential national symbol — South Africa House — and acted as a magnet not just to all the far Left groups, but to a large number of young people, especially Blacks, looking for somewhere to put their anti-apartheid

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energies. According to Norma Kitson, the picket line was a political education for everyone who came — including her. (Anyone who smoked or drank while holding up a placard of a black political prisoner like Mandela or Walta Sisulu was firmly reprimanded by young Blacks for showing disrespect.) And she says she felt afraid of such young people, the punks and Black youth, before she learned to work with them.

THIS IS GOING to be the real test of AAM. Paul Boateng, one of the Black leaders whom AAM has been anxious to involve, says he would never condemn City AA because 'I saw a lot of angry, young black people involved on those pickets and I don't see them involved in other AA activities'. The overwhelming whiteness of Saturday's march from Hyde Park was testament to that.

In resolution 38, passed last December, AAM affirmed that it has a 'distinctive role' to play in the anti-racist movement here. Yet many Black people believe AAM is too nervous, fearful of loosening its roots in the labour movement bureaucracy, its dependence on the steady support of a Left dominated by old style communists only to be swept away in a tide of angry Black youth. Ben Bousquet, Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Kensington, was one of several who mentioned the feeder marches which the Black community around the Mangrove in Notting Hill has twice organised — only to find themselves kept away from the head of the march by 'the same tired old leaders'.

The struggle against apartheid is having a radical effect on a whole new generation of young Black people — more women than men, says Ben Bousquet, and it is there that some of the most sharp political battles will be fought out. While for most white AAM supporters the ANC is the undisputed leader of the liberation movement, the all-Black Pan African Congress attracts more support in the Black community here because of its emphasis on Black autonomy. It's not an issue in terms of solidarity work. It is in terms of Black British politics.

Michael LaRose, of the Black Parents' Movement also sees the future in AAM opening up to the initiatives of Black groups. His has been picketing Tesco's since last September and now is looking for some national co-ordination of the wave of local store pickets. 'Trolley filling', when an activist fills a supermarket trolley with goods, gets them checked out and refuses to pay for them in protest against the South African goods on the shelves, is catching on. The Black community in St Paul's Bristol has got Tesco's to pledge to stop carrying any South African goods.

Such actions, often winning strong support from the local Black community, need to move into the mainstream of activity. In the long term, they will have more effect in changing political life than local authorities (almost 200) adopting policies opposing apartheid. Or even any number of housing estates named after Nelson Mandela.

Membership of Anti Apartheid is £9 for the waged, £5.50 for students, £3.50 for the unwaged. The address of AAM is 13 Mandela Street, London NW1 0DW.

An era in ink

VICKY, THE cartoonist, took his own life 20 years ago. He had come to this country as a refugee from Nazism and, a small dark figure of boundless physical and intellectual energy, dressed habitually in black, he carried with him to the end an aura of Continental cosmopolitanism.

But he became at the same time a true part of the culture and politics of his adopted England. He read and remembered vast passages of Shakespeare and Dickens, but also Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear. He observed and satirised the British Establishment with an eye that had real understanding of the strengths as well as the weaknesses of his victims.

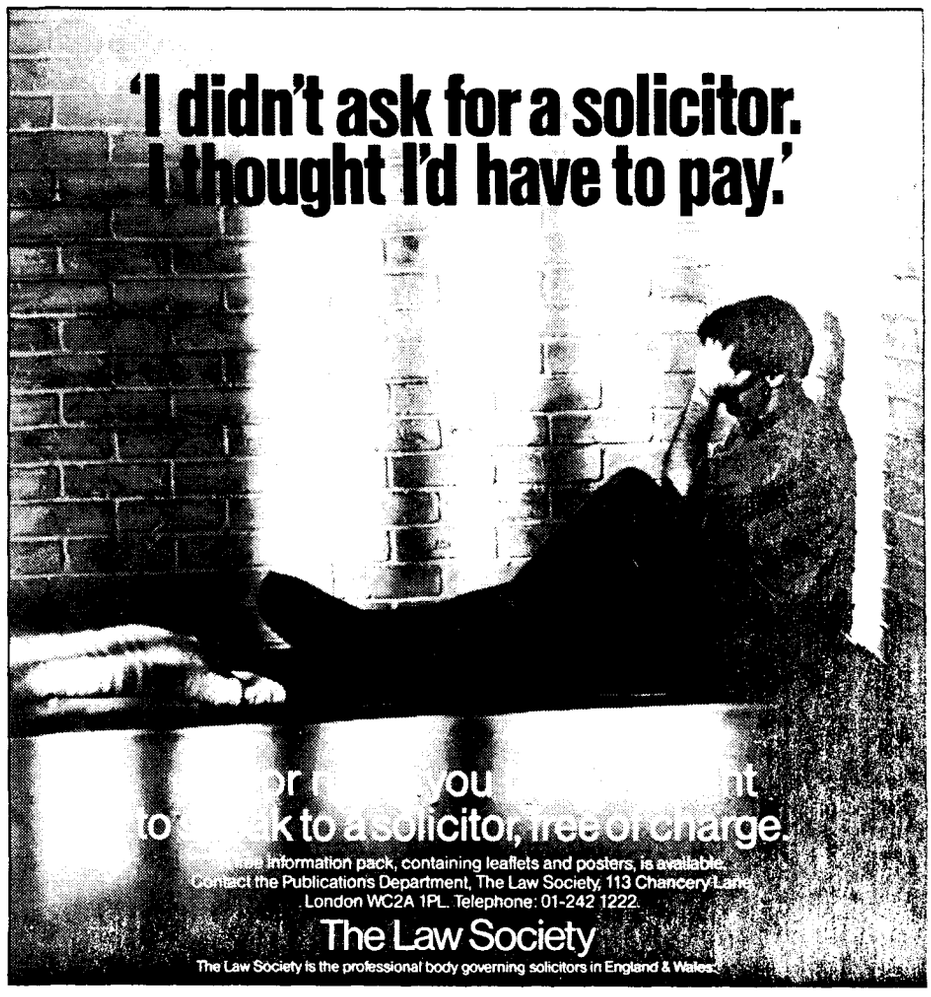
We at the *New Statesman* retain a particularly fond memory of Vicky because, for over ten years, from the mid Fifties to the mid Sixties, he was an integral part of the magazine. Every Monday he would turn up at noon at Great Turnstile not just with one, but with three or four offerings of political cartoons for that week's issue. And he remained to the end the sternest critic of his own work, worrying about craftsmanship and detail in drawings even at the height of his reputation. Second only to Kingsley Martin himself, during that period Vicky reflected the spirit and represented the conscience of the magazine more than anyone else associated with it.

For all these reasons the *New Statesman* is delighted, in co-operation with the Cartoon Centre at the University of Canterbury, to be organising an exhibition of Vicky cartoons as part of this year's Clerkenwell Festival. The exhibition will consist of the best of Vicky's work in the *New Statesman* between 1955 and 1966 — a period dominated politically by Supermac, a persona that was very largely Vicky's creation.

What emerges from the drawings above all is Vicky's consummate skill at capturing the likeness of his targets. Macmillan or de Gaulle, for example, he drew in a hundred different distortions, but they were always unmistakably Macmillan and de Gaulle. Vicky's knack was to discover the facial feature to exaggerate, which then became his hallmark and his competitors' cliché, and the essence of his art was the ability to get under the surface of a politician's appearance in such a way as to expose the character. Although his humour was savage, his subjects relished his attention.

The exhibition is at the Pennybank Gallery, 33-35 St John's Square, EC1 from 10am to 5pm Monday to Saturday (NOT Sunday), 8 to 20 July inclusive, admission free.

Hugh Stephenson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MEDIA

Is British reporting of S. Africa 'free'?

TONY SEWELL

A FRIEND of mine told me how, in her early days as a producer for the London radio station LBC, she was outraged at a news bulletin the station was giving out on South Africa. The report read:

> At least 14 Blacks have been shot dead by South African police as a mob of 3,000 people marched on a white suburb of a township in the Cape Province. The deaths come as South African Blacks commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre when police shot dead 69 Blacks during a demonstration.

While arguing with the news editor my friend explained that the way the information was given was racist. If Black people are called 'Blacks' or 'a mob' they are given no personality, not even a context; they are an amorphous black mass. While the white people are from a 'suburb' and are allowed a noun rather than a plain adjective.

Her arguments were irresistible and the next bulletin had significant changes:

> At least 14 Black demonstrators have been shot dead by South African police who opened fire on a crowd of 3,000 protestors marching on a white suburb in the Cape Province. Further south, demonstrators have erected flaming barricades in the township of Sharpeville . . . where 69 Black people were shot dead by police 25 years ago.

It's my argument that the present reporting from South Africa, irrespective of South African government restrictions, displays the same methods used in dealing with Black people in Britain. The story above has a precedent in British riot reporting or the so-called Black Monster who kills his own child or rapes a white woman. It displays a basic inability to deal with Black people, who are either so simple that they can be summed up in a few strident headlines, or so complex that the liberal press and the BBC have to call in academics to put Black expression under a microscope.

As with the reporting of Black people in Britain, the media relies on only a few Black South Africans to speak on behalf of their communities. In Britain, I'm sure former GLC councillor Paul Boateng would admit that there are other leaders than just him able to articulate the aspirations of Black people. In the case of South Africa, Bishop Desmond Tutu is suffering from overexposure. While his message of support for sanctions is important, there must be a wealth of perspective to call on from other groups that are even more radical than the ANC.

Marc Wadsworth, news reporter and Labour Party Black Section activist, attacks the simplicity of this sort of reporting: 'What annoys me and insults my intelligence is the emphasis given to the ANC. In the liberal press we get the story of the ANC and its history given by some white academic. In the *Guardian* there is continuous reference to the ANC — telling Black people who should be their true representatives.'

BBC television has, for Wadsworth, taken a somewhat naive position in trying to report from South Africa with an objectivity that implies that there are two sides to every argument: 'I don't think you can be balanced about racism and facism.'

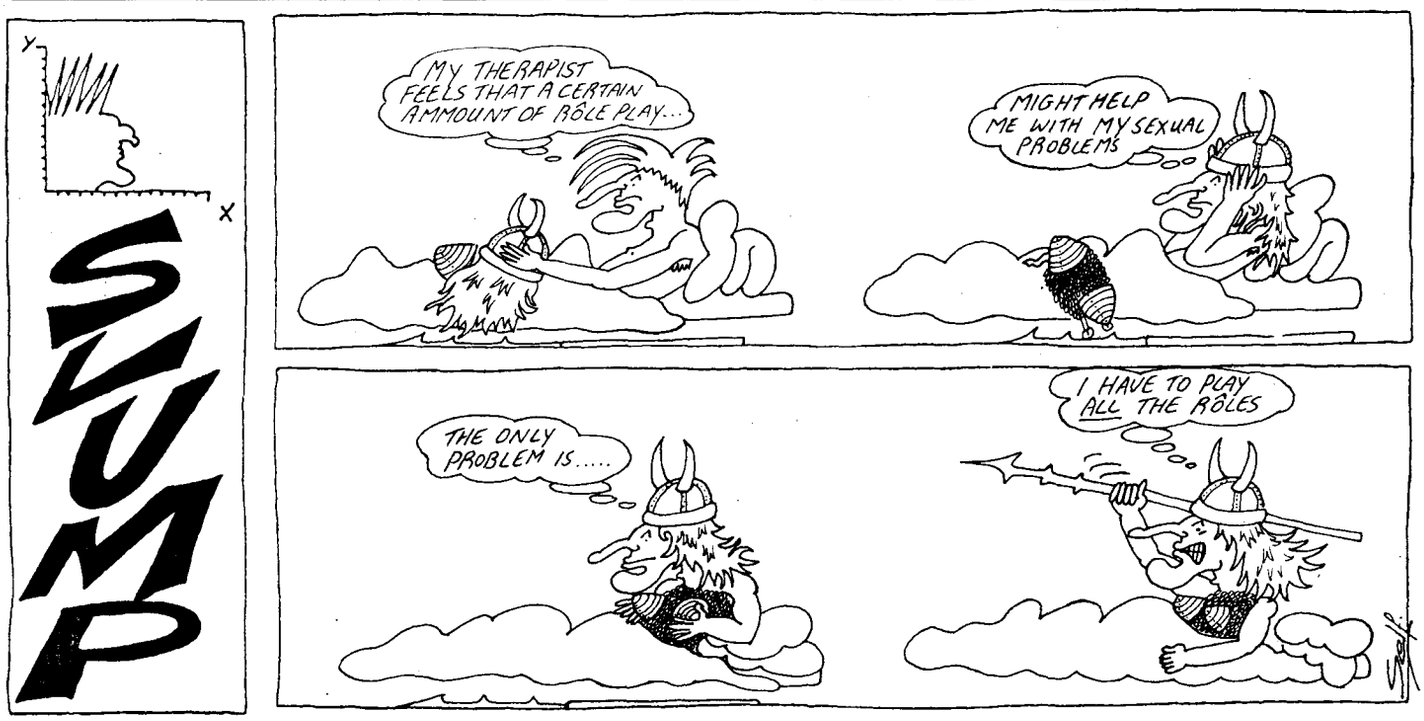
In this he's supported by the London office of the African National Congress, who said: 'We are very concerned that all we now see on television is the South African government handout, which does not reflect what is really happening. And the South African Embassy is asked always to give the so-called "other side" of the argument.'

It would be wrong to say that the BBC's reporting is inadequate in all departments. Radio reports and features have been excellent and at times have slammed the Pretoria regime for its racism. But the lack of a Black discussion programme on BBC television does expose the need for a greater Black input into the debate on South Africa.

It's been confirmed by the BBC that members of the public have been ringing to complain about the amount of coverage given to South Africa. Although the actual number of complaints is small, it does bring into question the whole style of television coverage of South Africa. This is not *Dallas*, and the issues are serious, but points can be made about South Africa if it is presented as a British issue as well as one that affects people far away. We need more information on how much interest we have in South Africa and who in terms of companies, assets and personalities are involved. The investigative reporting that needs to be done in our own backyard has not yet begun.

The BBC argues that a well-rounded picture of South Africa isn't possible because of the clampdown by the regime. What's really disturbing is that by putting out the restricted information, we will be made to drink the tampered information that South Africa has used to mislead the world, but even more to mislead itself. If it's impossible to get honest stories out of South Africa, then a look at South African interests at home is not a bad alternative. □

Tony Sewell writes for Voice, *Britain's best-selling Black newspaper.*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X
SLUMP
MY THERAPIST FEELS THAT A CERTAIN AMMOUNT OF ROLE PLAY...
MIGHT HELP ME WITH MY SEXUAL PROBLEMS
THE ONLY PROBLEM IS.....
I HAVE TO PLAY ALL THE ROLES

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DIARY

Ian Williams

Liverpool

Sunday. On New Brighton beach, the tide brought in evidence that barrier contraception is as popular as ever. 'Look at the Jellyfish!' the kids shouted. Biodegradable condoms may have drawbacks but they could get religious sponsorship and be ecologically sound. If they followed the trend of other designer commodities, they'd only need a stylish name on the side and it wouldn't matter whether they worked or not. But the durability of current models in the biocidal, abrasive, toxin-laded tides of the Mersey is a far more eloquent testimonial than the old five pints of water test . . .

The towering accommodation rig which the Cammell Lairds stewards occupied has been towed back in from the Irish Sea and looms over the river. The stewards went to jail for contempt. I gather the gas-field workers hold the rig in some contempt themselves, comparing conditions on board with being in the brig on the Titanic. The dark rumours of structural problems are of course nothing to do with the stewards. But Nemesis comes in unexpected ways on those who lock up trade unionists.

○

The comrades had a try at revenge on Monday's meeting of Liverpool's Temporary Co-ordinating Committee. A claque of young and aggressive paper sellers was under the misdirection of one of the commissars. 'Mulhearn's twice the ****ing man you are, Williams' they shouted — at Bob Gregory, the local NUPE official who was walking with me. With similar targeting problems, the people who'd brought in the police to clear the Black Caucus from the council chamber last year were now demanding assurances that the cops wouldn't be called upon to clear out ex-party members from the TCC.

○

Another fine U-bend the comrades have got themselves into was revealed over the weekend, as privatisation spearheaded Liverpool City Council's New Economic Policy. On the counter was almost any piece of sellable city property. The Diary previewed some of it earlier in the year when Burton Manor College's closure was mooted for having unproletarian horizons — they had courses on astronomy. The views of the political Flat Earthers appeared even more restrictive when I discovered that Liverpool in 1933 was the birthplace and home for three years of the British Interplanetary Society, the oldest body in the world devoted to space exploration. Internationally respected, it has had little honour in its own country, which on current rates will be queuing for a steerage berth on the Andorran space shuttle.

○

Included in the civic sale of the century were over 200 council homes. While any passing landsharks were invited to the sale, not one Housing Association or Co-operative was asked. Thoughtcrime flourishes despite them, however. The book on the Weller St Housing Co-operative, as canvassed for by Jules Lubbock and the *NS*, is the city's best seller. Although it took Prince Charles's imprimatur to get it a publisher, I'm sure sales weren't dependent on his foreword. Emblazoned on the title page is 'His Royal Highness Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB'. 'What Union's that?' asked one co-operator, 'Is it in the TUC?'

The establishment expressed awed surprise at how ordinary unemployed people could organise themselves. The astonishment seems to have the same flavour as that of a dog if the lamp-post turned round and showered it. The human furniture of this land can speak for itself! But what happened to the co-operators has happened countless times in strikes and campaigns. The essential bankruptcy of our social system is shown in its human waste. Many of those people are now unemployed in nice houses. It would be nice if they could create a producer co-operative now, but a publishing company isn't a bad start.

○

Wednesday. I was given a title which never made a best-seller. *What is the Labour Party* was published by one Terry Harrison as a Liverpool Militant Pamphlet. But I suspect it's been out of print for a while and all available copies shoved down the memory hole in Militant's Minitrue. Lenin's conclusion quoted in the pamphlet is: 'If the English Communist Party begins revolutionary work within the Labour Party, and if Messrs Henderson are forced to expel it, this will be a really big victory for the Communist and revolutionary movement in England'. He didn't say anything about going to the capitalist courts.

This missing link explains a lot. The expulsions are a Bolshevik conspiracy contrived to put some truth in Lenin's rumours. Therefore Kinnock, Turnock and Cure are really long-established sleepers, positioned in the Labour leadership to ensure this really big victory for the revolutionary movement. Or did I miss out on something?

○

In a Greek restaurant we were told the tale of the two Davids. The Liberals' conference was held for some reason in solidly Labour, and despite the Pier solidly inland, Wigan. David Alton brought David Steel across for a meal. Seeking to impress David Junior, David Minor brought pavement politics into the restaurant and asked the waiter what he'd recommend as best. 'A Labour government!' came the reply.

○

The week ended at a private view of a cartoonists exhibition. I looked hard for desert isles, honeymoon couples, dungeons and stripey clothed burglars. Not a cliché in sight. Except that if anyone mentions culture in Liverpool, we reach for a bottle. In the pre-Monsoon heat, in the humid heave around the free bar, creative entrepreneurial thinking was going on. 'How about punkah wallahs on a job creation scheme?'. Even though the occasion was the opening shot of the Festival of Comedy, people looked haunted. Visions of a Thatcherite future of service industries, of rickshaw wallahs and a servant problem are looking all too likely to be a laughing matter.

ROGER WODDIS

Screw the Lady

President Reagan's success in Congress over $100 million aid to the Contras and his rejection of the World Court's condemnation of his war against Nicaragua coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty.

In New York harbour, proud and standing tall,
There is a statue with an upraised arm.
Hand on my heart, I say 'God bless you all' —
And screw the Lady with her New World charm.

A hundred years of liberty have laid
A mantle on the crimes that I commit.
A hundred million dollars' worth of aid
Should have had the huddled masses eating shit.

Give me your torturers, your rented thugs,
Your freedom fighters desperate to see
Cash in the Caymans, dollar deals from drugs,
And they can bank on full support from me.

Now Congress has made liberty a whore,
She lifts her robe beside the Golden Door.

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Orde Eliason/Link

REPRESSION IN SHANTY TOWN

PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK reports on a peculiarly brutal corner of South Africa's 'emergency'

Johannesburg

THE SOUTH AFRICAN government justifies its declaration of a state of emergency and clampdown on anti-apartheid opposition by claiming that it wanted to implement wide-ranging reforms, but that this process was disrupted by a few 'radical elements' bent on revolution. It is the last-gasp defence which South Africa's dwindling collection of allies in the West and business leaders inside the country are using.

Expressing a typical view, Clive Knobbs, the president of the Chamber of Mines, said last week: 'Had some meaningful acknowledgement been given to President Botha's reforms, the effect would have been to encourage broader internal acceptance of the reforms and further liberalisation'.

Above: women wait for the long bus ride back to their homeland after work — they'll probably have to return within a couple of hours

Nowhere is they myth of 'reform' more evident than in the tiny Bantustan of Kwandebele, a rural slum about an hour and a half's drive northeast of Pretoria. South Africa is to grant 'independence' to Kwandebele on 2 December, a fact that has inspired a bloody civil war in the territory, leaving more than 100 people dead since January. Kwandebele is little more than a few farms and eroded hills, crammed with shanty housing for up to half-a-million Blacks 'resettled' from other areas — that is, either moved from other Bantustans because they were of the wrong ethnic group, or forced off white-owned farms when their labour was replaced by maize harvesters, or squeezed out of the cities through the policy of 'influx control' and a shortage of housing.

Four ethnic homelands have already taken 'independence' from South Africa in terms of the policy of 'grand apartheid' which was devised by former prime minister Hendrik Verwoerd. This means that their eight million subjects have lost their South African citizenship — and thus any claim they might have on political rights.

Despite claims by President P. W. Botha that these people would regain their citizenship as part of the government's latest 'reform' initiatives, less than a quarter can become South Africans again, little more than will lose their citizenship when Kwandebele

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becomes 'independent' at the end of the year.

Kwandebele is a product of social engineering. It is a postage stamp of a dumping ground for what civil rights groups have taken to calling 'surplus' people. Most are discards whose labour is not needed because they are too old or too young, or because the country's economic depression has lessened the demand for labour. Employment in Kwandebele consists of a few sweat shops with investment form Taiwan, Israel, West Germany and the Kwandebele government. Other than that, employment is virtually non-existent and those people fortunate enough to have jobs spend up to 10 yours a day travelling on buses, which start leaving for Pretoria and the Witwatersrand at 1.30 in the morning, returning late at night.

A STRANGER STANDING at the crossroads outside Kwandebele during the night would be struck by the stream of Putco buses, first returning from Pretoria and Johannesburg — and then leaving Kwandebele, with only a gap of a few hours. On the cold, crowded and bumpy journeys, passengers cover themselves in blankets to make up for the sleep missed at home while others, forced to stand, fall asleep on their feet.

Kwandebele, which encapsulates the misery which apartheid has inflicted on Black South Africans, has been recently distinguished by having the most severe emergency regulations in the entire country imposed on it. A virtual iron curtain has gone up around the Bantustan with no one who is not a permanent resident allowed inside. Curfew restrictions, amounting to house arrest for the entire population, have been introduced between 9pm and 5am. The only people allowed out of their houses between those hours are those on their way to and from work.

Anyone who is not a permanent resident who is found inside Kwandebele is liable to be arrested. Goods may not be delivered to the Bantustan without the permission of the Commissioner of Police and children are not allowed to leave the magisterial district of their parents. It is also an offence to be in possession of disused tyres or petrol not stored inside an automobile — a move presumably aimed to prevent 'necklace' murders. And no person may 'play, loiter, or aimlessly remain on any public road or road reserve within Kwandebele'.

According to rumours leaking out of Kwandebele, hundreds of people have been detained in house to house searches and large-scale violence is continuing. But journalists cannot get in and, even if they could, they would not be able to write what they saw. The regulations say: 'No person may make public, spread, distribute or transmit any news or commentary concerning the actions of a force, or a member of a force in connection with the safety of the public.'

Much of the violence has been clashes between Black vigilantes, known as the Mbokhoto, who are loyal to Kwandebele's Chief Minister, Simon Skhosana, and radical youths known as 'comrades'. The Mbokhoto are a class of shopkeepers and small traders in the Bantustan, whose trading licences are dependent on the largesse of Skhosana and his cabinet and who stand to share in the profits of the ruling class once the Bantustan becomes independent.

The Mbokhoto — whose chairman is Skhosana, an illiterate yet wealthy businessman — have been accused of imposing a reign of terror in Kwandebele this year. They have taken to 'disciplining' schoolchildren, beating up and sometimes murdering opponents of 'independence' and enforcing circumcision on adult Ndebele speakers who have not been through the tribal schools.

Charges of assault and murder have been laid against Skhosana and his Minister of Interior, Piet Ntuli, for a vigilante raid on the neighbouring area of Moutse at the New Year, when 26 people died and hundreds were abducted and flogged by the Mbokhoto, some to death, on soapy floors at the community hall in the Kwandebele capital of Siyabuswa. The raid on Moutse followed the incorporation of this fertile area into Kwandebele, against the wishes of the 120,000 local population and amidst warnings by Moutse leaders that bloodshed would ensue.

Like the decision to impose 'independence' on Kwandebele, the incorporation of Moutse was taken by the South African government without any real consultation with the people affected and without any regard for the havoc which has been caused in their lives.

In recent months, Kwandebele has been the scene of a rural uprising, both in response to the 'independence' plans and to the excesses of the Mbokhoto. Popular resentment has combined with opposition to 'independence' from the traditional leaders of the Ndebele people, the Ndebele royal family, the Mahlangus.

The chairman of the tribe, Prince James Mahlangu, said in an interview before the emergency was declared that there was a strong feeling against the 'lawlessness' of the vigilantes, who had been guilty of 'harassing, threatening, beating and killing people'. Prince James and his family have been living under siege for months with armed guards around their residences.

Kwandebele is one of the most repressive areas, even by South African standards — in terms of the poverty, the night riders on the buses, the excesses of the vigilantes, the disregard for people's wishes over Moutse and 'independence', the greed of Skhosana and his government and now the emergency regulations.

But the enduring image in the middle of all this is the construction of an independence stadium outside Siyabuswa. It is here in December that Pretoria expects the people of Kwandebele to celebrate their freedom.

AS UNION CARBIDE LINGERS IN COURT . . .

BHOPAL'S PEOPLE TURN TO SELF-HELP

Sacked workers and gas victims have united to put into practice a wide range of alternative employment projects in Bhopal. MARTIN STOTT reports on the small-scale, co-operative ventures starting to replace the US multinational's plant

IT IS A YEAR and a half since the accident at the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal. The plant has been closed ever since, and the workers were formally dismissed last July.

Bhopal has almost dropped out of popular consciousness. Yet there has been no resolution of the claims against Union Carbide by gas victims and their relatives and Bhopal itself is in a state of limbo; an uncertainty about the future; whether Union Carbide will try to reopen the plant; how much, and when if ever, any compensation will arrive.

Relief has been desultory and the victims have become a convenient political football between the Indian government, Union Carbide and the US courts. Attempts have been made to drive wedges between former workers and gas victims — often the same people, 60 per cent of the former workers live in the *bastis* around the plant — with some government agencies suggesting that the workers were as responsible as management for the accident.

Efforts have also been made to undermine any workers organisation by offering leaders well-paid alternative employment — at the other end of the state. Some 50 per cent of former Union Carbide workers now have new jobs. The situation in Bhopal is still grim, people are still dying, many still suffer terribly, headaches and aching bones, spontaneous abortions and birth defects, partial blindness, and psychological scars on the 200,000 surviving victims, survivors who lost husbands, wives, children, brothers, sisters, parents, jobs and their ability to work.

It is in this context that the formation of an alliance of former workers and gas victims in Bhopal is operating to develop an alternative strategy based on safe and socially useful production. Its continued existence is in itself something of a triumph.

The alliance, initially called 'the workers' committee for planning alternative production' and now formalised into an organisation — Gas Pirrit Rahit Samithi (GPRS [Gas Victims Relief Committee]) — is now one of several organisations operating both separately and together to translate ideas into action in Bhopal. Links have been forged

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with other diverse groups, including Bhopal Victims Support Committee and Quaker Peace and Service in the UK, the federation of independent unions in Bombay, Trade Unions Relief Committee for the Gas Victims of Bhopal (TURF), the parastatal Central Institute for Agricultural Engineering, which is located in the countryside near Bhopal, Oxfam India and radical science groups in Delhi and the state of Madhya Pradesh.

GPRS estimates that 60,000 gas victims are in need of employment. It has collected a petition with the signatures of over 10,000 heads of households supporting the development of safe and socially useful production and with the support of the Quakers has carried out a survey of employment needs and skills in the *bastis*.

All this has generated enthusiasm, but with almost no resources of experience, translating it into action had been a problem. Best equipped, and most advanced, is the women's trade union SEWA (the Self-Employed Women's Association), whose branch in Bhopal includes several full-time officials who were already organising women in the area before the accident occurred.

With the support of Oxfam India, SEWA has begun to develop an ambitious alternative employment strategy — including the creation of two co-ops, employing about 120 women in each, one making clothing, particularly school uniforms, and another, more controversially, making bidis (poor peoples' cigarettes made from a rolled tobacco leaf). They have also initiated several training programmes, mainly in traditional craft activities, and have set up an associated health centre, nursery, and five nutritional food centres. All these were designed exclusively for women gas victims.

GPRS, LACKING the experienced trade union officials to get things going, initially drew up an infocussed set of 'good ideas', coupled with demands that Union Carbide hand over the plant to them. Gradually these have been transformed into more concrete projects. A People's Health Centre part-funded by money channelled via TURF from trade unionists in other parts of India is in operation.

Much of their thinking has involved consideration of long term health and nutrition questions, rehabilitation and the creation of work that disabled people can carry out. In conjunction with CIAE, a series of food processing projects are under development including soy, wheat and rice milling, spice powder manufacture, dal products, soy powder and high protein biscuit manufacture. A bakery and a community kitchen are also under consideration, as the Union Carbide factory is surrounded by other still operating plants with substantial workforces but no catering facilities.

CIAE has developed a programme to train gas victims in the fabrication of agricultural implements and the repair and overhaul of agricultural equipment — the Union Carbide plant has a well-equipped fabrication shop. Other projects under active consideration include the manufacture of boring machines for pump sets, the fabrication of steel furniture, the production of low energy bricks for housing, training programmes in electronic wiring and assembly as a prelude to creating a manufacturing facility, and training in computer data entry and programming.

GPRS is conscious that alternative production must involve adjusting present work patterns, not only in terms of the creation of co-operative ventures, but as an alternative to the management style of Union Carbide. People affected by the accident must, if possible be allowed to continue in their present employment. For example, the railway porters at Bhopal station, close to the Union Carbide plant, can no longer, because of respiratory problems, carry large amounts of luggage around on their heads. The proposal is to convert the station stairs to ramps and to provide the porters with hand carts to wheel luggage around.

The projects still seem small in comparison to the size of the problem in Bhopal, but in the face of government indifference, and continued wrangling in the American courts over compensation, the initiatives of GPRS and SEWA are proof not only that something *can* be done, but that the victims themselves are taking the initiative and challenging official apathy with alternative plans based on criteria very different from the priorities of Union Carbide or the Indian government.

Money is urgently needed to help the alternative production movement in Bhopal. Contributions can be sent to: Bhopal Victims Support Committee, c/o Transnationals Information Centre, 54 Ayres Street, London SE1 1EU 01-403 7550.

Martin Stott was in Bhopal earlier in the year sponsored by QPS and working with GPRS and SEWA to help develop socially useful production alternatives to Union Carbide. He is active in the Bhopal victim support committee and works for Oxfordshire Co-op development agency.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

There is a tradition of an Ancient Wisdom relevant, however, to any age and people. It tells of the eternal verities of existence, of Universal processes and laws which are of the nature of Nature herself - of whom we are all part.

This must be of interest to real thinkers . . .

For information write to:
The Blavatsky Trust (B)
P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

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LETTERS

How to deal with Militant

Barry Winter, editor, *Labour Leader*

So Ian Williams thinks things are going too far in the Labour Party now that the 'wrong' people are being expelled (*NS* 20 June). It is all right to get rid of people in Militant it seems, but come on chaps let's not go overboard.

But, Ian, that is precisely the point, once you start this particular ball rolling it has a nasty habit of gaining momentum. Sure Militant is a problem, but Neil Kinnock's assault, backed by many on the soft Left, is miguided and dangerous.

This whole sorry story began when the right-wing of the Labour Party became hysterical about calls for greater party democracy. Militant did not initiate, let alone lead these demands. The group simply provides the Left's Achilles' heel.

Should Labour win the next election and should some individuals and groups be critical of what the leadership does (and doesn't do) then the chances are that the process begun now will continue. More and more critics will be found to be covert 'trotskyists'.

Far better to have an amnesty for Militant, providing it abides by the same rules as other registered groups — and that means it has to be honest about its existence as an organisation before it can register. Then the Left would not have to keep defending Militant. Instead the ball would be in Militant's court. If it decides to register it will have to admit that it has been lying all along — and be judged accordingly.

Or else it can maintain the pretence that all its 'readers' just happen to agree with every sentence published by Militant — and be treated accordingly. Let's leave the choice to Militant and stop breeding intolerance in the Labour Party.

Right to reject male world

Jane Vellacott

Janice Raymond's analysis of women's relationships with each other (*NS* 30 May) is fundamentally mistaken. She evidently feels that the experience which women have of 'dissociation' is illegitimate because it is unworldly. She suggests that it is actually harmful to women. The whole point about what she calls political dissociation is that women who become feminists, or part of the women's movement in some way, discover that their being has been defined in male terms. In order to discover a being that is their own, dissociation is entirely necessary.

Her analysis rests on the assumption that men think women are unimportant, superfluous, and that dissociation will further confirm the separation from the world that has already happened because of this attitude of men's. On the contrary men know exactly how indispensable women are, and how potentially powerful.

The future of life depends upon the willingness of women to reproduce and the future of the economy depends upon the fact that thousands of women work for no money and look after children so that the rest of the population can work for money. All this as well as the psychological fear and hatred that men have for women. Otherwise why has it been so necessary for them to put so much energy through the centuries into the control and repression of women?

The dissociation Raymond speaks of is a reassertion of strength, which of course leads to a fearful reaction in the patriarchy of increased repression. Janice Raymond gives herself away as an honorary member of the patriarchy by identifying 'financial existence' and 'physical appearance' as yardsticks in her assessment of women's 'downward mobility'. In other words her image of women is the same as that of a man. The only powerful woman is a woman with money and the only happy woman is the woman who dresses nicely and has her hair done once a week.

She accuses women both of withdrawing from the world and of making their personal lives too public within it. The fact is that women have historically been both private and public property, and are struggling both privately and publicly to put an end to such humiliation. Great courage exists within the women's movement and Janice Raymond is one of those women who does both herself and other women a great disservice.

Police in schools

Fred Jarvis, General Secretary, National Union of Teachers

In his article (13 June) John Wright accuses the NUT, with other educational organisations, of naivety in its dealings with the police over the publication of its guidelines on police/school liaison. Yet if the Union accepted his arguments and opposed all efforts to improve a strained relationship I feel it would be commiting the more serious offence of neglecting a professional duty.

A teacher's prime responsibility is for the welfare of the children in his or her care. The NUT maintains that young people are likely to benefit from the police force's undoubted expertise in matters such as personal safety and drug abuse. Much less inevitable is the likelihood of police using their access to schools as a means of gathering information on pupils, particularly when the visit is subject to the sort of conditions mentioned in the guidelines.

These rules acknowledge that separate education and law enforcement roles exist for the police and attempt to keep it that way. They propose that a teacher is given the responsibility of liaising with the police and deciding in advance the exact nature of the visit and the conduct towards pupils while on the premises. The guidelines also suggest that breaches of the guidelines should be penalised through the Police Disciplinary Code.

Whether the police are prepared to keep their side of this agreement will be tested in time. But the Union has at least adopted a positive and rational approach to restoring goodwill between the police and educational community.

Oh, the patience of censors . . .

R. J. Rayner & J. C. Masters, South Africa

The South African Foreign Minister, Pik Botha, told millions of Americans recently that there was press freedom in this country.

Imagine our surprise to find that, not only was our copy of the South African *Weekly Mail* severely censored, but so was the *New Statesman* (No 2881). Pages 23 & 24 were completely removed, and the introduction to van Niekerk's article on p.22 blacked out. Some patient soul had sat with a permanent marking pen covering the parts that other censors don't bother to touch!

We can only suppose that Pik Botha's claims for South African press freedom are as credible as PB's claims for reform — or Reagan's claims to be a peacemaker!

Liberals alliance with Tories

Christian Wolmar, London N1

Two words were left out of my piece on the London-wide post-GLC committees which misrepresented the Liberal voting record (*NS* 20 June). The article should have said 'the Liberals supported *all but* five of the 50 grant applications opposed by the Tories'.

Take me to your Leader
THE GANG OF ONE
HOW MANY MPs ARE THERE IN YOUR PARTY, DOCTOR?
OH, NUMBERS MEAN NOTHING. LEADERSHIP IS WHAT COUNTS
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A MAN OF DESTINY SHOULD NOT GET CLUTTERED WITH RIFF-RAFF AND RAGGLE-TAGGLE
OH, QUITE
ARE YOU DESTINED TO RULE THE WHOLE PLANET?
WE-E-ELL, WHY STOP AT ONE?
NOW, YOU MUST HAVE SEEN A FEW PLANETS IN YOUR TIME...?
JUST THE NINE
©JOHN MINNION
TELL ME THE ONES THAT HAVE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

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Debbie Nunn

PASSING CLOUDS

Short story by Adèle Geras

IN JERUSALEM, as far as God is concerned, smoking counts as labour. That is why it is banned for the duration of the Sabbath, along with other backbreaking tasks like switching electric lights on and off and tearing pieces of lavatory paper from the roll.

Before dusk, Rifka remembers to tear up enough pieces of lavatory paper and place them on the window sill with a cake of unused soap to weigh them down. There are always left-over sheets at the end of the Sabbath, but still, Rifka worries every week: will twenty-four good-sized pieces be enough? She forgot the soap once, and found snowdrifts of tissue on the floor in the middle of the night. Rifka is a heavy smoker. Saturdays are painful for her. Sometimes, during the day, while her mother is praying, or dozing on the balcony, she can run up to the roof for a quick puff. The smell of boiling soap, and blue, and damp clothes has passed into the wooden struts that hold the washing lines, into the warm asphalt and butter-yellow stones, into the splintery, grey clothespegs.

Rifka sits on an upturned tin bath and sends veils of smoke like white chiffon trailing towards the sun. The city is spread around her: domes, towers, dark trees and

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ribbon-roads, tiers of roofs, pearl and gold from one horizon to the other, and she does not notice it. She is enjoying the taste of her cigarette and looking down at the packet. Ascot brand: a beige cardboard box with a picture on it of a black, horse-drawn carriage. The word Ascot is printed in red. She stubs the cigarette out and hurls it as far as she can. Perhaps one day (this is her fantasy) it will fall from heaven onto the round fur hat of one of Jerusalem's holiest men. Will he think of it as a message from God? Who in their right mind wears a fur hat in a Middle Eastern country in the summer? Does God really require lunacy from his Chosen People? Do they (the denizens of the district called The Hundred Gates) truly believe He doesn't know the difference between Poland in the seventeenth century and Israel in the twentieth? The more Rifka thinks of God, the less she credits Him with anything resembling common sense.

Creeping back into the flat, she takes a bite from a poison-green salty-sour pickled cucumber she finds lying on the kitchen table on a flowered plate. It will disguise the smell of smoking on her breath.

This memory belongs to Hannah: Rifka smoking on the roof of her grandmother's flat.

Hannah was five years old. Rifka is her aunt, who has never stopped smoking from that day to this. Hannah comes from a long line of smokers: fervent, devoted, mystical smokers. They all just love the taste, are mad for it. Hannah's mother's aunt, whose name was Nehama, started it all. When Dvora, Hannah's mother, was fourteen, Nehama gave her cigarettes. Dvora never looked back. By the time Hannah was born, lighting a cigarette was the second thing Dvora did every morning. The first was putting on her earrings: clip, clip, here a pearl, there a pearl, and all this while still lying flat on her back in bed.

Great-aunt Nehama never moved, Hannah was convinced of it. Every time she saw her (a child taken to visit an old woman) Nehama was sitting in exactly the same spot — on a bentwood chair next to a table covered with a white oilcloth swirling with patterns embossed on to its surface. (If your children leave you to find their fortunes in the New World, at least let them send you oilcloths from the Golden Land.) In front of her, always, was a glass of tea with a slice of lemon floating in it, and a packet of cigarettes roughly rolled in yellowing paper and overflowing with dark tobacco like horsehair. Nehama was brown and wrinkled all over. Her hair was bound up in a greying scarf, tied tight as a bandage, and her black eyes peered at Hannah through the smoke that formed into wreaths and feathers round her skinny shoulders before losing itself in the threadbare curtains.

Dvora's shoulders were plump and freckled. Smooth and pretty above the edge of her long-line brassière. That was how Hannah started. Dvora would sit, putting on her lipstick, her powder, her perfume, ready to go out. She would sit, brushing hair the colour of lemon tea into smooth twists at the back of her head. Her hands were busy. Light me a cigarette, darling, she would say, and Hannah did. She'd light it, and hand it to her, or put it in the ashtray near her mother's hand. No one knew then quite how dangerous it was. No one knew. Not properly. Hannah gave Dvora the cigarette and then all the contents of her mother's daytime bag had to be transferred into her evening bag. This is what Hannah did. This is what she loved to do. This was Hannah's ritual. These were the smells: pink powder, spilling out of the compact, sweet, like the taste of icing sugar, 'Arpège' rising from Dvora's dress, from her mother's lovely black and white dress with the huge fuchsia flowers, and the bitter smell of all those tiny crumbs of tobacco that clung to the silky lining and lurked in every corner of every one of Dvora's handbags.

At least Dvora was not religious. At least, far away from Jerusalem, she could smoke blithely all through Friday evening and the whole of Saturday. Rifka, her sister, back home in the City of God, had taken to calling on neighbours: a Russian couple called Panya and Vanya, who were thrilled to shelter the conspirator, to be part of the deception. It hurt no one. Poor Great-aunt Nehama! She was, as well as a hardened chain-smoker, an extremely devout and God-fearing woman. How did she manage from dusk to dusk every Sabbath, going without? Her love for God (our God is a demanding God all right), her obedience to Him, must have been great indeed.

Penny White taught Hannah to smoke properly, many years later. Penny White was beautiful. Penny White looked like the daughter of Sophia Loren. Penny showed her how. Penny's mouth made a perfect circle as she let the smoke out. Hannah copied her, as closely as she could. Maybe, if she put her mouth into exactly that shape, coloured her lips with that precise shade of lipstick and lowered her eyelids just like that, yes, in just that way, then she, too, would be beautiful like Penny White.

Hannah and Penny White were both sixteen years old and at boarding school. They practised smoking in front of the mirror in Penny's bedroom, during the Christmas holidays. Hannah's parents lived abroad and Hannah often went to stay with Penny for a few days. This time, there was going to be a Dance. Penny and Hannah imagined themselves nonchalantly pouting their mouths to accept a light, sucking in the smoke and letting it out through luscious, glossy lips so that it circled their shoulders in mysterious wisps, driving unknown boys wild with desire. To this end, they practised for hours. Hannah liked the taste.

Nelson. Three shillings and ten pence for twenty. Pale blue packet. The first time Hannah dared to buy her own was at Liverpool Street Station on her way to spend the day with her One True Love, already a student at a University. This was during the holidays, of course. Ever since Betty Lyndon had been caught smoking in the bathroom (sitting on the edge of the bath in her dressing gown having a quick gasp before bedtime) and had in consequence lost all her Prefect's privileges, all but the most foolhardy had stopped taking risks. Now, on the train, Hannah felt quite grown-up. She would offer Ian (the student) one of her cigarettes after lunch in the pub. By the end of the day there would be a few brown shreds in the corners of *her* bag: like mother, like daughter.

By the time Hannah left school, her grandmother was dead and so was Great-aunt Nehama. Her aunt Rifka no longer needed to tear up the lavatory paper for the Sabbath, nor to run over to Panya and Vanya's flat as if her life depended on it. She could be as sinful as she liked: light the gas cooker and fry herself an egg, boil the kettle for coffee and smoke all over the house. This she did, and enjoyed it too, but (and especially very late on Friday night after all the guests had left and she was on her own) sometimes she felt sad that her mother was no longer alive to forbid her such pleasures, and she missed her mother and cried for her and almost regretted the snatched and guilty cigarettes, smoked up on the roof.

— Do you smoke after making love?

— I don't know. I never looked.

So went the joke, current while Hannah was a student. She was a real smoker by this time: buying cigarettes every day, needing them, walking through the dark to distant slot machines to get them: an addict.

IT WAS AT ABOUT this period that cigarettes were found to be dangerous, even lethal. Hannah was urged to stop, especially by Dvora, who felt guilty for introducing her to nicotine.

— It's too late for me and Rifka, Dvora said. We're too old. All the damage is done already.

Hannah took no notice at all. All her smoking friends confessed that there was this cigarette or that cigarette they didn't particularly enjoy, perhaps the first one of the day, or the last, but Hannah was different. She genuinely liked the taste of every single cigarette she smoked:

indoor and out of doors
at work or resting
when alone and when in company
to cheer up or to calm down
a substitute for food and an addition to food
a satisfying aesthetic object (long, white, slender as a pillar)
a stage prop to keep nervous hands busy.

She liked the names, the packets, the flip tops, the soft tops, the micronite filters, the mentholation ('cool as a mountain stream' — poetry!), the embossed coats of arms, the jolly sailor's face peering out of a hole in the

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middle of a lifebelt, the tobacco that counted and the blue and white packets of Gitanes that said Paris as loud and clear as the Eiffel Tower itself and whose smoke could transform her room into an extension of La Coupole. Every single thing about them was delightful.

When Hannah was pregnant with her first child, friends and colleagues urged her to give up smoking for the child's sake. Hannah's husband, Daniel, ws a smoker too and could therefore say nothing. Hannah smoked right through the pregnancy and, as soon as she possibly could after the birth, she hobbled down to the Day Room painfully (all stitched up after the birth) to have her first puff for nearly twenty-four hours. She felt pure happiness. She had a beautiful daughter and a packet of Silk Cut safe in her dressing gown pocket.

At first, after first appearing in the world, Hannah and Daniel's baby cried and cried, for what seemed to Hannah like days.

— She is suffering withdrawal symptoms from all that nicotine she's been used to getting from me for the past nine months, Hannah said.

Soon after the birth of his daughter, Daniel stopped smoking and took to opening windows to air the room and to sniffing curtains as he passed them. Hannah continued as she had done for years. The best cigarette? After a good meal? After the first cup of coffee? Last thing at night? No. Hannah thought it was the one in the early hours of the morning, when she'd fed the baby and put her back into the cot. She liked sitting on the bathroom stool in the light that shone in from the landing and feeling the house quiet around her. The baby snuffled and snorted a little, then fell into a whispery breathing that reminded Hannah of small puffs of smoke: passing clouds.

The years passed, the statistics mounted up. Not only could your lungs become cancerous and your breathing virtually cease, you could even, it seemed, get gangrene in your legs and have to have them amputated. The beautiful packets had had warnings printed on them for a long time now. Skull and crossbones — that should be the emblem of every brand in the world. The exhortations began to come at Hannah from every side: newspapers, radio, television. Above all, television. There was a six-part series to help those addicts who were eager to fight their way free of the smoke's fragrant tendrils and could not do it on their own.

The years passed. Hannah's baby became a girl who wrinkled her nose whenever Hannah kissed her, who refused to have nicotine-stained fingers washing her hair, who pushed the smoke away with her hand whenever Hannah spoke to her.

— When I was your age, Hannah said, younger even, I used to light my mother's cigarettes.

Hannah's daughter was kindness itself. She said:

— But you didn't know then, did you? About how dangerous it is?

Hannah decided to give up smoking. She sent away for a free booklet: advice about how best to achieve her goal. The booklet was full of jolly cartoons and grim facts. It advised Hannah to find other occupations for hands and mouth. She began to suck peppermints and to knit again. The last time she had knitted anything was in 1955.

This memory belongs to Hannah: Rifka has a basket of small balls of wool, all the colours you can think of, leftovers. On winter evenings, when it's too cold to sit on the verandah, Rifka sits at the dining room table, knitting a shawl for a new baby born on the outer fringes of the Family. Hannah wants to learn. Rifka tries to teach her, using all the coloured oddments, but Hannah's hands are too small for the long needles. The wool won't go where it's supposed to. Sometimes stitches slip off the needle altogether and then Hannah's knitting gets tangled up and Rifka has to unpick it and start it all over again. Hannah grows tired of knitting and watches her aunt instead, clicking out a fabric of soft lace from wool as fine and white as the streamers of smoke that rise to the ceiling every time Rifka puts aside her knitting and lights a cigarette. □

Adèle Geras's Letters of Fire, *a collection of ghost stories for children, has just been re-issued in paperback by Fontana.* Happy Endings, *a novel for young adults, will be published by Hamish Hamilton in October.*

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DANCE

Driven to distinction

Stephanie Jordan

A new approach to repertory has fired Ballet Rambert with life

IN THE USA there is a tradition of one-choreographer companies. Here, however, the bigger dance companies all provide mixed programmes: works by two or three regular resident choreographers and the odd celebrated guest.

Although more democratic, in that authority doesn't rest precariously on a single talent, our system bears no guarantee of success. Audiences might feel happier with variety, but dancers often fail to execute any style properly and, as critic Alastair Macaulay has shrewdly observed, those choreographers fulfilling a statutory commitment to one new work per company per year may never feel the need to vary their output.

Enter Richard Alston, the new Artistic Director of Ballet Rambert, on the way to a personal solution to the problems of the repertory system. Under his directorship, repertory remains, but all the new work belongs to the Alstonian genus.

In the current Jubilee season at Sadler's Wells Theatre there are evocations of Rambert's past: in the early miniatures of Ashton and Antony Tudor, in Glen Tetley's *Ricercare* and Robert North's *Death and the Maiden*. But setting the new tone are the Alston works *Java, Soda Lake, Dangerous Liaisons, Zansa* — and his radical commissions, his clear view of the path ahead.

The three guest choreographers, Michael Clark, Ashley Page, Ian Spink, all possess the rich, personal movement-vocabulary, the sense of rhythmic vitality and musicality that are strong features of Alston's own work, and Alston, acting the Diaghilev, has prompted a spurt of collaborations, even proposing designers or composers.

Alston doesn't expect complementary pieces precisely in his own mould; he simply invites his guests to make their unique statements within the limits imposed by his company. And, if his methods seem authoritarian, they are so far succeeding. Now we see that Spink can be succinct where he was expansive, that Clark can construct fine dance without the camperoo that has sometimes confounded his other recent work and that Page can prove himself amusing and terse (though I'll have to wait for a later date to speak of his *Carmen Arcadiae Mechanicae Perpetuum*).

The dancers have responded magnificently to the new logic, looking better than ever, miles ahead of other British companies in precision and excitement. If any piece epitomises their achievements during the last few months, it is *Zansa*, Alston's most brilliant and most dense piece. Few choreographers can generate such power, let alone sustain it. From the outset, Alston drives his cast hard, a society in turmoil dancing for its life. The designs by painter John Hoyland and the music by Nigel Osborne fuel the primitive urgency and mystery.

Zansa extravaganza: Catherine Price and Michael Hodges in Alston's 'most brilliant and most dense piece'

A cumulative process begins with two, three then four couples in blue; a group of bright intruders swell the numbers; then the two tribes merge as if gathering forces to combat some higher order of energy. A small figure in yellow (Catherine Becque) becomes leader, dashes a panic solo across the apron, strains skyward, only to join the others, floored at the end. *Zansa* represents the knife-sharp extreme of the language that Alston has refined over the years, dynamised here by the ambition and fullness of the dancers' plunging and springing and the fury of their turns.

Hoyland has contributed splendidly to the rising temperature of the work, backing the prologue in angry, dripping crimson, later introducing a gleaming, yellow fireball as complement to the newcomers and a burnt, molten surface as the piece speeds towards its conclusion.

Spink's *Mercure*, as well as making affectionate reference to the name of the company's first theatrical home, has gained much of its inspiration from the original 1924 ballet presented at Count Etienne de Beaumont's *Soirées de Paris*. The subject suits his penchant for reference and unreal situations — a mix of characters from Greek mythology, Commedia and the 1920s — and his ironist's talent for portraying sophisticated behaviour and intrigue (various sexualities, a stolen necklace, secret love letters, scampering in the half-dark, a mayhem of partner-swapping). Satie's 12 brief movements, modernised by Harrison Birtwistle, force Spink into aphorism without loss, using all his resources from minimal gesture to brilliant counterpoint, integrating props and changes of set into the stage action: a balloon moon; a portable stage for the three Graces. The often nocturnal lighting and design are magical.

The most intriguing and distracting feature of Clark's *Swamp* is the use of Charles Atlas's series of slides: blown up stills from the film of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and isolated words like 'too far', 'stone' or, finally, 'swamp'. At first viewing, I discovered (or forced) certain connections. In the film, Taylor apostrophises Burton at one point thus: 'Hey, swampie!'; the dancers swamp the stage and engage aggressively. At a later performance, I concentrated on the action and admired the ingenuity with which Clark has given a pristine classical language a brutal razor-slash finish and invented countless ways to express the strain of pulling apart or holding a partner down. It menaces; the dancers, dressed in bog-brown matt and satin Bodymap outfits, start to Bruce Gilbert's earsplitting beat. Then it softens; gradually reaccumulating power to a martial and then anarchic conclusion. The pacing is terrific; so is Clark's sense that power derives as much from the formality of procedures as from overt body language. ▷

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In the light of all this, it seems odd that the company's Associate Choreographer, Christopher Bruce, has been positively retrogressive in his new contribution and has returned to an earlier tormented and gloomy Rambert style, which uses violent body-filling gesture to make its point. *Ceremonies*, to Edward Shipley's necromantic *The Seventh Enochian Key*, expresses the concealed fantasies of a courtly society (here Elizabethan) in pastiche *pavan*, then revelry and torture, the unholy treatment of woman, ending in a sort of *Rite of Spring* virgin-killing. This is subject matter exhumed worm-corrupted from the Sixties and Seventies. It is not made exciting as dance, nor has it anything to do with the current, healthier Rambert aesthetics. □

THEATRE

Outsiders

Benedict Nightingale

Making Noise Quietly
ROBERT HOLMAN *Bush*
Some Kind of Hero
LES SMITH *Young Vic*

THERE ARE DRAMATISTS whose plays may be compared with houses, mansions, castles, even Babylonian palaces. There are others who present you with rooms, corners of rooms, cupboards, corners of cupboards, and yet somehow manage to send you away feeling that your sightseeing hasn't been the least stingy. At best, they confound logic and defy the laws of mathematics by persuading you that less is more. In this second category Robert Holman continues gently and unpretentiously — for lack of emphasis and pomposity is with him akin to an aesthetic imperative — to build himself a formidable reputation.

After *German Skerries* there was *Rooting* and, after *Rooting, The Estuary*, all of them delicate yet suggestive studies of country people, country life. And now, a few plays later, here's a dramatic three-parter, **Making Noise Quietly**, which never failed to keep your snoozy scribe rapt and alert, slight and cursory though its components could perhaps be accused of being. A gay artist meets a conscientious objector, seemingly by chance, for an ad-hoc picnic in the Kent of 1944. A naval officer arrives unannounced at a terraced house in Yorkshire and proceeds to inform the motherly person who greets him that her son is dead, killed in action somewhere off the Falklands. Then it's 1986, and a tough-minded German businesswoman is doing a little amateur social work on the odd couple who have strayed into her woods, a tense and bitter British soldier and his psychotically withdrawn stepson.

Being Friends, as the first part is called, shows two men amiably preserving a social veneer while they discover how very congenial they find one another. Ronan Vibert, radiating bright, nervous grins and gawky, gushing bonhomie, is gradually revealed as an imaginative replica of the late Denton Welch, already on his way to literary fame. He talks of the love-affairs he's had at school and since; his companion, coolly played by Jonathan Cullen, counters with a troubling secret of his own, the memory of a horribly tortured German soldier in a hospital where he worked as an orderly. A doodlebug cuts out overhead, explodes a few fields away. The possibility of intimacy intangibly grows. The Cullen character confides that he's losing his Quaker certainties and may soon enlist. Suddenly the two of them are naked, basking in the Kent sun.

The encounter in *Lost* is more painful, more obviously fraught, doubly so given the background to the bereavement that's revealed in the opening moments. Ian, the dead officer, had renounced Yorkshire ordinariness for what was, it seems, a most promising career, professionally and socially. Indeed, he'd rejected his parents to the point of not so much informing them of his marriage. The envious, resentful, hurt father we don't see, though he and his feelings are deftly evoked for us. The emphasis is on the mother, in whom grief is competing with rancor, love with hate, a sense of waste with the need to believe in it all. 'It *was* important, this war, I'm proud of our Ian,' she concludes, and almost believes herself.

Already it's becoming apparent that there are connections between the plays. Their people have all been touched in some way by violence, suffering and, for better or worse, transformed by it. More centrally, they find themselves communicating more profoundly than, you suspect, they commonly can with those who supposedly know them better. That's certainly the case with the title-play, involving, as it does, a Jewish-German businesswoman who has survived the concentration camps and a soldier who, like her and several characters we met earlier in the evening, is well aware what it means to be a reject, an outsider. His parents didn't want him, nor did his wife. Now he's left only with a small boy who, thanks partly to the beatings he tries desperately to stop giving him, has retreated into silence, punctuated by animal squawks and shrieks.

The contradictory closeness of these two is well caught by Holman and pretty well played by Paul Copley, skinny, bristling and inwardly burning, and by Daniel Kipling, a tiny, wounded chimp with a sensitive Greystoke lurking somewhere inside him. He's not quite so successful when Helen Ryan's ultra-charitable businessperson — the evening's least plausible creation — is attempting to lure them from behind their self-created barricades; but he falters only at an upbeat ending which, I suspect, would leave child psychologists boggling as much as it did this layman. Yet Holman's instinct for truth, and unaffected ability to spot what's poignant in it, is what one remembers: that, and a paradoxical impression of spare richness, astringent abundance very characteristic of his work to date.

Some Kind of Hero works rather better on the stage than I recall it doing on radio a few months back, thanks largely to Treva Etienne's marvellously robust, authoritative performance as the black soldier awaiting trial for the murder of his commanding officer in war-torn Ulster. The suspense — withholding from us so long and unnecessarily that the killing was a racial protest — seems less artificially contrived; the killer himself seems less blatantly a megaphone through which the author can be sardonically right-minded. His sufferings seem less exemplary, more particular and true. The result is still a lot less than subtle; a dash or two of Holman would undoubtedly help; but the piece's passion and power can't be denied. □

CINEMA

Show some emotion

Adam Mars-Jones

Fool for Love (15)
Cannon Tottenham Ct Rd, Cannon Chelsea, Premier Leicester Square, Electric Notting Hill
An Impudent Girl (15)
Lumiere St Martin's Lane, Chelsea Cinema

THERE'S NO BOREDOM like film boredom; it's like no boredom I know. Film is the only medium that is consumed under conditions of enforced communality — a set time, a set place, a set number of invitations to raid the foyer for unappealing foods — without itself being live. Nothing goes deader than a screen from which interest has been withdrawn. The cast has no chance (except in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*) of surpassing itself to snatch back wandering attention, and the audience is likely to feel that those responsible for the boredom have already made their getaway and are sunning themselves smugly by their pools.

Quentin Crisp in his immaculate film reviews for *Christopher Street* in New York adopts the Sunday-school principle of not saying anything if he can't say anything nice. If the film is bad, he will praise the air-conditioning in the cinema, the efficient plumbing in the Gents if need be. He might well find his prose straying from the screen at a showing of Robert Altman's version of Sam Shepard's play **Fool for Love**.

The film is a turkey with a pedigree, but a turkey for all that. Altman has for once departed from his recent practice of filming plays without dislodging them from their original format. *Fool for Love* has been 'opened out' and, as so often, the effect is of a candle being moved from a shuttered room into sunshine. No wonder it casts no shadows.

An acceptance of enclosure is the defining convention of theatre. Any cinematic imitation of that convention runs the risk of seeming arbitrary. But once you've opened out theatrical material it becomes possible to ask a different set of questions, not just about the resolution of a particular dilemma (Will Eddie

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and May get together?) but about characters who can now be approached from a number of angles (Why should I care about these people?).

Paris, Texas, another film with a Shepard screenplay, overcame some of these obstacles by balancing confined spaces with infinitely open ones, motel rooms with plains, claustrophobia with agoraphobia. There was no mere world of people in the film and so no means of finding the characters ridiculous, although there was plenty that would show up as laughable in a different context. In particular, there was an assumption that women are in thrall to men while men are in thrall to destiny; sung as a country song, I-love-you-darlin'-but-a-man-must-be-movin'-on, this theme would soon be laughed away.

In the film of *Fool for Love*, no longer propped up by any approximation of a proscenium arch but not joining up to any recognisable world outside, the emotions show up as wholly conventional. Shepard himself plays Eddie, a cowboy with fine bones, and Kim Basinger is May, his glamorous half-sister. They are obsessed with each other, or at least passion drives him — while she emits screams — to lasso a dustbin, a jukebox and finally a speeding Mercedes. She locks herself in the bathroom to avoid him and he breaks the door down, so the point must be taken as proved.

Meanwhile Eddie's and May's father reminisces in the background — though the flashbacks never quite match up to the reminiscences — and an orchestra inserts little squirts of 1950s-style modern music, just to remind us that we are in the presence of art.

The emotions on offer in Claude Miller's new film, **An Impudent Girl**, are by definition immature, since they are the emotions — admiration, envy, love, resentment — felt by young girls for each other; but they are dramatised with an admirable sureness of touch.

Thirteen-year-old Charlotte (Charlotte Gainsbourg) has a crush on Clara, a child-prodigy pianist the same age, while Lulu, a younger girl with an unspecified malady, has a crush on Charlotte. Charlotte finds Lulu a pain, but can't stop herself from intruding on Clara's life in the same way. Mille.'s camera isn't afraid of lingering on Charlotte Gainsbourg's sullenly elfin face and finds extraordinary things there.

Every character has unforced moments of grace and eccentricity. Even a merchant seaman who has designs on Charlotte turns out to be learning Esperanto in his spare time and keeps an illuminated globe, his most treasured possession, in a cupboard for fear of thieves.

When he molests her, Charlotte breaks the globe on his head and runs away. Later that day she feels compelled to ask her father, in one of the film's most touching moments: 'If someone hits someone . . . with a heavy glass object . . . and they don't die at once . . . can they die the next day?'

Under all sorts of pressure, and taking a phrase out of context, Charlotte imagines that Clara wants her to be her manager and that they will leave together after Clara's next concert. Lulu, terrified of losing Charlotte, stands up at the concert and chants in rhythm with the orchestra, 'I don't want Charlotte to leave with the pianist! I don't want Charlotte to leave with the pianist!'

Maturity in *An Impudent Girl* is seen to have more to do with accepting other people's emotion than with experiencing your own. The film is a small miracle of tender freshness. An extraterrestrial in an intergalactic motel room could watch *Fool for Love* on the video time and time again and never find out what an emotion was; but it could learn enough from *An Impudent Girl* to make a better-than-average foster parent. □

TELEVISION

Come, woo me

Peter Hillmore

IT'S NICE TO FEEL so wanted. I never realised quite how important a television critic is in the scale of things until I got ready for the summer stint in these pages.

Television companies have been sending me details of their productions, complete with helpful little descriptions (like the blurb on book jackets) about 'revealing and important' analyses of the tensions felt by Indonesian peasants as modern life encroaches. (I notice that documentaries become more and more revealing and important the more exotic the location and the subject. It must be the argument the producer uses to justify the air fares. Producers like going abroad.)

Long before I watched *The World About Us*'s **The Musk Connection** (BBC2), I had been informed that 'Producer Richard Taylor describes his film, which involved much travelling in the Himalayas filming startled deer, and many weeks in Hong Kong, as presenting "a tale of real-life intrigue that will surprise, challenge and offend both traders and conservationists alike".' Well, he would, wouldn't he?

Occasionally, the relentless enthusiasm of the press releases is more accurate than the writer intended. All right, so André Previn is 'a brilliant, articulate man of many talents', a man who can be trusted when he earnestly recommends a television set or microwave, but why didn't this brilliance come across in **Favourite Things** (BBC2) when Richard Baker fawned all over him, spraying musk like an adoring mountain goat? It could be because no one could brilliantly answer questions like, 'Do you enjoy walking in that marvellous wood at the end of your garden?'. Or it could be that the programme wasn't about André at all, but his two-year-old son, Chubbs. The press release told me that 'we meet André's two-year-old son Chubbs, and he describes, revealingly, his favourite moments in performance.' That could have explained a lot and might even have been more interesting than hearing an obviously conceited man explain why he was so modest.

But it's not just the press releases and information packs that have made me feel so important. There have also been the pleadings for my company at private screenings of programmes. These shows for the critics are put on for three reasons. There's the unspoken flattery that we're far too busy people to be expected to stay in at night and do the job we're paid to do, and might have given the evening off to the servant who knows how to work the video. Then there's the fact that, if we watch a programme on a big screen in a viewing theatre, it's difficult to get up and put the kettle on, while channel-hopping is impossible.

And there's the chance to meet the people who made the programme. As you pick at the buffet lunch, collecting a plate of celery sticks stuffed with cream cheese and wait for a production assistant to bring you a drink, the producer is on hand to explain what he or she was trying to do in the programme just in case it wasn't clear to me, as an ordinary viewer. Ordinary viewers don't have this advantage (actually it can be a disadvantage, as it's more difficult to be rude or critical about someone if you've had their earnest face pressed to yours, telling you how difficult it was to dispense with the traditional narrative structure of film).

I didn't go to any private screening of **You've Gotta Have Heart** (ITV) but I think it would have been easy to be rude — even if the presenter, Miriam Stoppard, one of 'we doctors', had explained the narrative technique in person.

There seem to be two ways of presenting medical programmes. There is the awestruck **Your Life In Their Hands** (BBC2) (it's hard to think of a more reverential title) where we are shown the doctors behaving like compassionate car mechanics. It's difficult to criticise them because we have no way of knowing if they're sewing up correctly, or have put the vital valve in the right place. The programmes have the virtue of showing us bits of our body that other programmes don't reach — also the unintentional one of showing us how patronising doctors are to patients. The medical profession knows it as 'Their knife in your glands.'

The scenes where the surgeon explains in perfunctory tones to a woman that one of her ovaries has been removed is more painful in many ways than the ones that show the knife slipping through the astonished flesh. You saw it in the **Horizon** (BBC2) on the new intake of medical students, 'the doctors of tomorrow' as the commentary intoned with reverence. In spite of the scenes of high jinks and low behaviour, the mood was one of reassurance. The authorities wouldn't let us see the students doing inexpert dissections, although, in a few years time, their skilful knife cuts are bound to be on screen.

And then there is the jolly, you'll die laughing approach of Miriam Stoppard and the 'doctors' at Yorkshire. Her medical programmes, with their embarrassed celebrities, sketches, skits, obvious advice, bad jokes, hideous links between topics remind me of those old Cliff Richard musicals: I expect someone to say 'Hey, I've got an idea, let's do the operation right here.' All became clear when on to the screen came the name of Barry Took. The man with the power to reduce viewers' complaints to simpering jokes on *Points of View* could be counted upon to reduce illness to a series of dud one-liners.

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MUSIC

Golden oldies

Jon Savage

Pop nostalgia may be a sign of current creative vacuity, but there's money in them thar re-releases

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TIME IN POP is now serial rather than linear. A cursory look at the charts will show any amount of songs, or artists, exhumed from a bewildering number of pop periods. Populist fashion revives every youth style since the war at once. A 16-year-old will buy a Beatles' LP released before she was born. A current BBC prime time show, *The Rock'n'Roll Years*, compiles archaic pop footage with contemporary news clips. Pop nostalgia is rife; it's part of the mainstream.

Many pop ideologues offer this up as a sign of pop's palsy, and this may be true, but it omits any analysis of why this should occur. Economically, the main reason is the depth of control that the music industry retains over an increasingly fragmenting market. It dictates a frantic, heedless pace, in which careers are burnt out (or never have the chance to flame) in a climate of immediate, instant overkill. There is rarely any long-term strategy. This results in a febrile attitude to time in which everything is locked into a never-ending present — into which the past is fed and distorted.

Culturally, pop has both predicted and followed economics. Since punk, pop has become a post-modern form. Its modernism took the form of a linear type of culture where it was thought, throughout the Sixties in particular, that artists would 'progress', that each new record led on from the one before. Groups would mutate from 2½-minute noise machines to auteurs constructing intricate 40-minute song cycles. This has disappeared: over the last ten years, the post-modernist phenomena of reference, self-consciousness and hype, packaging and history becoming part of the product, have taken over.

If the past is constantly referred to in the present, why not go back to the source? If you walk into any of the new megastores now sprouting up — themselves a new way of consuming pop, a far cry from the listening booths or record counters of yesteryear — you will find an immense variety of music from the last 40 years on offer. As the mainstream industry struggles with the present, while barring any real innovation, many young people — as opposed to the over-25s that you might expect — are turning to the past for amusement and inspiration. The old record-

Street songs

Naseem Khan

SMALL, DOUR TERRACES; a high street with all the ugly paraphernalia of modern suburbs; one glass-block secondary school: what on earth is there here to justify Welsh National Opera's choice of the area as the base for its second community opera? On the face of it, the mundanely named Splott (in the western part of Cardiff) has little going for it. But dig below the surface and even Splott gives up a history with giants and heroes and villains.

How that history has been found and how it's expressed has been the meat of the WNO's long work there, in and with the community. As a result, the Splott that's seen by Charlie Way, resident writer on the scheme, is not the one usually visible. Ghosts of vast steel works hover over a field dotted with saplings. Down the high street run long-gone spectral trams. And, from the grass surrounding Willows High School, Captain Earnest Willows rises gently in the air, in his pioneering airship on a morning in 1910, and cruises slowly down to Cardiff Town Hall. 'A tragic area, in many ways,' says Way. The opera he has scripted from local memories and called *Song of Streets* reflects that. But he has also tried to incorporate the quality of resilience and a vision of hope. For, while heroes are important (Captain Willows stands beside Peerless Jim Driscoll, unofficial world featherweight champion in 1909 and constantly loyal to his roots in Splott), the action is moved along by the chorus. 'They,' says Way firmly, 'are the active element.'

The principle of co-operation is not a new one for the WNO; neither is community opera. The Splott exercise builds on a previous project that resulted in *Poor Twm Jones*, with and about the Cardiff area of Ely.

Both that and Splott have been set up by Sue Harries and her imaginative Education Department at the WNO, probably the most pioneering opera outreach work at present in this country. The whole scheme has four basic aims, explains Phil Thomas, composer on both projects. These are to debunk the popular idea of opera ('incomprehensible fat sopranos falling off battlements'), to use the process of shaping an opera to increase awareness of the richness of an area (participation, says Thomas scathingly, ought to mean a bit more than being drafted as back-up animals in *Noyes Fludde)*, to teach skills — from acting to working with fibreglass — that would remain afterwards and, last, to introduce the opera company to a wider role in the community.

Ely, the WNO's first crack at the idea, surpassed all expectations. It was a hassle, no question: ten meagre weeks to enlist the involvement of local groups, to harry schools, invent a choir, find a story and a base. 'I was writing music by the yard to fit,' recalls Thomas happily. But, in the end, two performances were given in a disused local bus garage ('full of birds and oil') by a cast of 300 to an audience of 1,000 each night. 'A bit of a mess,' says Thomas, 'but a rapturous reception.'

The team has learned lessons from Ely that augur well for Splott's opera between 10 and 12 July. That they've been able to profit by them has partly been the result of what Sue Harries reckons is 'the healthiest sponsorship deal I've ever had'. Allied Steel and Wire abutts onto Splott and it is their wholehearted support that has enabled the preparation period to be extended from Ely's inadequate ten weeks to an enviable two years. The concept of a team of community artists working with the area stands, but this time a writer (Way) has been added to the list.

The whole process has been meticulously planned and phased. Skills-based workshops have been going on throughout the period, both in Splott and in the WNO's own building. The area's four junior and one secondary school have taken opera work into their curriculum. A regular free newsheet, going to every house in Splott, has provided a focus, as have mid-term events like a scratch performance of *West Side Story* where 1,800 turned up wanting to sing. The logistics of this are startling. So are the ones for *Song of Streets*: performances will involve over 500 participants, will be the result of two years' work and take place in a vast, empty, new, one-storey factory building on a nearby industrial estate (about 25,000 sq.ft in all).

But statistics of this sort are misleading: a kind of macho assessment scale that's at odds with the project. The real point of it is the way in which it has united energies and tried to express, in the 70-year span of its story, the details of a local identity. 'I think that's what the core of a community project should be about: their current concerns,' says Sue Harries. The bonus of using the operatic form, she goes on, is that it is more conducive to the expression of large emotions — and large emotions *Song of Streets* has in plenty: the two World Wars; the traumatic first closure of the steel works in 1923 (and then again more recently); the end of the railway and the area's gradual loss of identity. But, big though they are, they are based on small, individual memories, stories and records. Look in Splott's Royal Oak and you'll find Joe Driscoll's gloves and other memorabilia enshrined on the wall behind the old dark bar. In the audience on the first night will be someone who worked in his old gym. It is detail like this, multiplied, that has built Splott's opera and should make it a night to remember.

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NICE TO SEE opera waking up to life outside the crush bar, and lovely to spend a day recently at Covent Garden's Royal Opera House: scores of deaf children, who'd been working with dancers who introduced them to movement through rhythm and the vibration of sound, were displaying the dances they'd created. A pity that sponsorship projects like this tend to be one-offs. The money moves on; the problems remain.

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company practice of deleting records after a month of failure or a year of success has passed.

In this expanding retro market, a few small, independent companies have led the field. Throughout the Seventies, a stream of rock'n'roll and, later, beat music albums became available. The market leader then was the Chiswick label which, through its subsidiaries Ace and Kent, has continued to make available an exemplary selection of obscure deep and Northern Soul, rockabilly, jump blues and doo-wop — a wide selection of Black music that, because of the structure of the music industry in the Fifties, never saw the light of day here.

What Chiswick found out was that releasing oldies could pay. Once the difficulty in obtaining rights was overcome, it was possible to plan a complicated release schedule on the basis of pressings of about 3-5,000 copies that were virtually guaranteed to sell out. This micro-economy has worked spectacularly. Apart from Chiswick, there are now three other specialised labels: Charly, which covers blues and R&B; Bam-Caruso, which covers the English mod-hippie crossover of 1966/67; and Edsel, which has 'progressed' from British Beat to full-blown psychedelia. Their success has stimulated the major record companies — like EMI — to begin a thorough re-release programme of their own.

The effect of hearing the past in the present is peculiar. Much of the interest in the Edsel/Bam-Caruso re-releases is the archive work they perform on a maligned, forgotten era of pop; for, since Punk, nothing has been so discredited as 'hippie' style. Ten years later, this prejudice is otiose. Listening to old but familiar material, and songs so obscure that they seem new, you now hear — amid the follies — a wish to experiment formally, an expansiveness and an idealism which seem very fresh. And, in the usual circularity, it seems inevitable that this will be the era next to be plundered by the mainstream pop machine.

Pop nostalgia has become integrated with mainstream culture to the point that pop 'classics' are now re-recorded for the new breed of corporate TV advert — like Renault ('I Feel Free' by Cream) and Nat West ('Pinball Wizard' by the Who). The independents' re-release campaign can be seen as feeding that nostalgia, yet I'm not quite sure. The care and depth with which the small companies approach their output (and their very size) makes possible and enjoyable a careful study of pop's inevitable past; it also militates against the frantic industry search for 'the next big thing' and mainstream culture's wish to rewrite the past in the degraded langugage of the present. □

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Beyond the avarice of dreams

Simon Frith

What we buy is not what we're sold:
W. F. HAUG's Critique of Commodity Aesthetics *examines this conjuring trick*

Things happen after a Badedas bath.

IN THE DAYS WHEN record companies still wanted to seem profligate, rock critics were showered with presents. Not just scarves and T-shirts, but all sorts of goodies: boxes of marmalade, road maps, briefcases, china mugs. (I still wear my Adam Ant anorak.) W. F. Haug analyses such gifts, distinguishing them from the free samples pushed directly through consumers' doors. Promotional gifts, he writes, 'fulfil their functions in a strange amalgam of *being* and *seeming*. They stand for and represent something else'. In other words, their real use-value (we could eat the marmalade, drink from the mugs) enables such gifts to represent the 'usefulness' of whatever they're promoting. 'By being useful and thus confirming their own use-value, they act as a promise of use-value of another product — the standard commodity of the donor.'

This is a good example of Haug's method in *Critique of Commodity Aesthetics* (Polity, £19.50 & £6.95), originally published in Germany in 1971. His analysis of capitalist culture, rooted in Marxist theory and marketing practice, stands in lucid contrast to the opaque pronouncements of a French theorist like Baudrillard. Their views of the problem are not, in fact, very different: for Baudrillard's 'ecstasy of communication' read Haug's account of the present-day commodity as 'an empty symbolic article'. But Haug is uninterested in modernism and post-modernism. For him, the 'aestheticisation of commodities' is a necessary consequence of exchange itself.

The peculiarity of capitalism is that its reason for being — the buying and selling of goods in the marketplace — rests on exchanges which are equal (each side must want what the other offers: money, a commodity) but unequal (what is being sold is not what is being bought). Buyers want to satisfy needs, to achieve particular use-values; sellers are concerned simply to convert their commodities into cash, to realise their exchange-value. As capitalism develops, use-value is subordinated to exchange-value; production decisions are determined by profit possibilities, not by what societies and people actually need.

This is a socialist truism and Haug's point is that, nevertheless, exchanges must take place, consumers must still think that commodities are useful. What capitalists now produce, then, is a *seeming* use-value: 'the aesthetics of the commodity in its widest meaning — the sensual appearance and the conception of its use-value — becomes detached from the object itself.' The commodity promises use-value, courts and fascinates us, but, once bought, turns out to be an illusion. Goods may have a use — Hoovers pick up dust, after-shave stings the cheeks — but not the use we bought them for: effortless housework, masculine confidence.

Haug's concern is to investigate how the aesthetics of the commodity work in practice and his analysis of advertising rhetoric and sales talk, ideas of 'design' and 'use', and his readings of particular products and campaigns are sharp and witty. In the end, though, the running distinction between true and false needs does rest on a moral judgment. Haug's grumpy notes on the declining quality of goods, his description of the 'corruption' of humanity as our very sensuality is moulded by the goods we buy, have distinct echoes of F. R. Leavis. The real evil of mass culture is that commodity aesthetics have become the only source of a language for our fears and desires.

Marx himself suggested that the capitalist's search for the means to spur people to consumption was 'an essential civilising moment' on which capital's 'historic justification' rested. Haug suggests that that civilising moment is now over. Workers are no longer developing their own productivity. In accepting the 'basically irrational inclinations'

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of the marketplace, they are no longer capable of an 'articulated' class consciousness.

The problem with this argument is its circularity: workers' lack of an articulated consciousness is the evidence that they have, indeed, been duped. Haug assumes that market manipulation works, without investigating the circumstances under which it doesn't. He seems himself to be seduced by capitalist rhetoric: studying only successful sales campaigns, taking advertisers' boasts at face value, equating packaging and product in ways that can be foolish. Andy Warhol's sleeve for *Sticky Fingers*, for example, wasn't completely 'empty'; it had a Rolling Stones record inside. Haug's analyses of marketing ideology need balancing with studies of the ways in which consumption can be collective and intelligent.

Still, this is an immensely refreshing read, if only in contrast to recent celebrations of stylists and designers as some sort of cultural vanguard. Haug reminds us that capitalism is *essentially* ludicrous, with its endless suggestion that it matters whether we wear the right shaped underpants, wash them in Daz or Persil, and his acerbic remarks on the vacuousness of 'aesthetic innovations' make salutary reading for the Left at a time when *New Socialist* has gone trendy, *Marxism Today* has announced an autumn 'new look' and the *New Statesman*'s repackaging is imminent. □

CRIME

Open verdicts

Nick Kimberley

THE POLICE PROCEDURAL as a literary form can be as cumbersome as its name. A fascination with the details of criminal investigation doesn't always coincide with the demands of a thriller: the very word 'forensics' induces lethargy. Nor, of course, is it easy to accept the moral certitude which the form implies. Cops are not the safe bet they used to be, although no police novel can afford to run the risk of implying that moral anarchy might win out over the Law.

Ed McBain's 87th Precinct novels are the best known and most skilful procedurals. The wearisome documentary detail (reproductions of death certificates, bus tickets, calling cards) gives them a spurious authenticity: so this is how real crimes are solved? But their value is not in these technical data, nor in McBain's insistence that his cops are real people with real pains and pleasures. His achievement is the creation of a huge saga (over three dozen 87th Precinct novels to date) in which the city is the central character, harbouring violence and paranoia alongside love and law. At its best (when McBain doesn't bother too much with his cops' private lives) the series has an almost mythic power, playing with prejudice and fear in an entirely appropriate fashion.

McBain's latest, **Another Part of the City** (Hamish Hamilton, £9.95), shifts location to New York's Fifth Precinct, a largely cosmetic move which allows superficial changes without altering the overall pattern. McBain has a large fund of sympathy for the common folk, nothing but scorn for the rich whose greed sets this particular story in motion. The split-level plotting shows that McBain can match any of the complexities of *Hill Sreet Blues*, a TV series which owes a lot to the 87th Precinct — although no cop there was ever as sanctimonious as Furillo. Perhaps because it's the first in the series, this novel plays safe, only allowing the merest hint of racism to spoil its ethical balancing act. Rape is an ever-present threat here, and in several other McBain novels. Some will find this unbearably prurient, but I think it's a genuine attempt to locate sexual abuse in a spectrum of violence.

The London police novels of Derek Raymond make few attempts at balance, or realism. In **How the Dead Live** (Secker, £9.50), police HQ becomes the Factory. The cop narrator is anonymous; his only contact with his superior, the equally anonymous 'the voice', is by telephone. The narrator is an avenging angel, bent on preserving democracy for the benefit of taxpayers. He's no straightforward Law and Order merchant but a philosopher whose morbid *Weltanschauung* leads him to talk to the dead. His quaint modernisms ('skank', 'freak') are counterpointed by a sonorously archaic turn of phrase: 'My conception of knowledge is grief and despair, because that has been the general matter of my existence.'

Little wonder that Raymond appeals to the French, whose taste in thrillers is more philosophical than ours. His novels will irritate readers looking for an orthodox solution to orthodox crimes, but their metaphysical ambition lends them a powerful originality. There's an edge here almost unique in British crime fiction: when a villain begs the narrator, '. . . be human, will you?', he replies, 'it's no real part of my job.'

P. D James's novels are entirely earthbound: a crime is committed, the suspects' alibis must be broken, the investigator (usually Commander Adam Dalgliesh) gets to the bottom of it — not without a certain ambivalence. None of us is innocent, after all. Dalgliesh makes an unlikely policeman, with a connoisseur's taste in art and several published collections of poetry. Even more unlikely than his writing poetry is the fact that people actually read it and, in **A Taste for Death** (Faber, £9.95), bemoan his current writer's block. Dalgliesh's life is fleshed out in the interstices of a convoluted plot; a brief glimpse of him, aged 15 at his mother's deathbed but unable to mourn, opens up possibilities for easy psychologising which James doesn't always ignore.

James tracks Dalgliesh's investigations in detail, displaying an intimacy not only with routine procedures (autopsies, the dreaded forensics) but also with the vast literature built up around criminal investigation. Her love of human frailty saves her from any complete commitment to the rule of Law — it is the police, not the criminals, who have a taste for death. That same commitment leads her to prolix elaborations: *A Taste for Death* runs to 450 pages, twice the length that McBain and Raymond find appropriate. The most interesting encounter here is between Dalgliesh and his new subordinate, Kate Miskin. Miskin, we are told, was an illegitimate child: is James saying something about the place of women in police work, in fiction, in life? No doubt; and no doubt Miskin will reappear, replacing, I hope, at least temporarily, the by now rather tiresome Dalgliesh.

Newton Thornburg tries to recapture the world of his earlier *Cutter and Bone* (filmed as *Cutter's Way*) in **Dreamland** (Sphere, £2.95): California is once again a skein of corruption built around money, and Crow, a free spirit, unravels the strands. Sexuality, particularly homosexuality, is predatory and slightly disgusting, with overtones of incest. This is a familiar view of contemporary America, and California has had to take more than its share of the blame. The novel is built around a quasi-political group stirring unrest and violence to its own ends. Masonic conspiracies make good fuel for contemporary paranoias, but few writers are able to get much mileage from them. □

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FIRST NOVELS

Cries and whispers

Grace Ingoldby

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MARY MONROE *Allison & Busby* £9.95
A Certain Mr Takahashi
ANN IRELAND *Bantam* £8.95

TOBY SAVAGE LOVES books. A man who, as his ex-girlfriend astutely comments, would be lost without a text, his heaven is sitting with his knees well under the desk at the Parnaby family library in Bloomsbury where he is employed to catalogue the collection of the late Dexter Parnaby: explorer/missionary of the old and now unfashionable school last seen, goggles on, crashing his plane somewhere in the jungles of South America.

Toby's surname is nothing if not ironic: Savage by name, he's a sponge by nature. He opens a book 'holding in his mind some ideal sound — the whisper of the perfectly made

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volume' and is, understandably, a trifle awkward when his job takes off in a dangerous direction: on a quest to the jungle for the missing plane on which a missing diary will provide the culmination to old Dexter's biography, on which he's inevitably embarked.

Now nicknamed 'Idiot', Toby comes to grief among the Javarunu tribe, providing an example, should we need one, of the fact that, though travel broadens the mind, you do take yourself along with you when you go. The humour of his situation is never fully exploited and the 'Idiot's' sexual antics with one of the Javarunu — 'Coupling with her was so easy, so free of guilt, so natural' — seems a bit gratuitous, but **Snakewrist**, a book about books and how long association with them distorts perspective, has its moments: the vision of Toby trimming huge and juicy jungle leaves into rectangles, folding them carefully and attempting to explain 'book' is touching and well done.

Richard Burns's Dr Penn in **A Dance for the Moon** is an American psychiatrist who runs a sanatorium at Winfell in the 1920s and considers himself both enlightened and secure. His treatment for the shell-shocked (officers only: it costs) consists of sewing, knitting and gardening, a minimum of medication, an atmosphere where trench horrors recede and patients are loved back to normality. David, a shattered Georgian poet, is a favourite with Penn's 'modern' wife who enjoys twee conversations about Garsington ('Now tell me all about poetry David') and finds him rather fetching in his panama. Modern theories, however, sit awkwardly in this part of Derbyshire where, beyond the Winfell gates, beyond-the-pale Brough, a drunken railwayman, is forced to cope alone with his memories of the horror of a world and a war in which those with posh noses and useless chins made 'a right bloody mess of everything'. Burns cleverly twists these different threads to snapping point when Cupid and Brough strike simultaneously, theory and practice fail to fit and good old-fashioned lust, jealousy and spite win the day.

Colin Mackay's **The Song of the Forest**, set in Scotland in the Dark Ages, is a year in the life of a village after all the able men have been slain. It's scrupulously researched, lyrically written and strongly illustrated by Alyson MacNeil.

Some cataract, some fault in the novel's chemistry, results in the country folk stolidly remaining 'folk' and, consequently, keeping the reader at arm's length. But, if the people are only half alive, the images shimmer. MacKay's strength lies in his sensual pictures: snow and the loping wolves coming out of the forest; summer and the rhythm of the scythes crossing the hayfield, deliberate and even. 'And the folk were singing across the field and the women's voices were mellow red and orange and brown in the evening grass, and the girls' were blue and green . . .' Paradoxically no intensity of description or attention to detail attains the simple stature of the author's note which ends the book: 'Until I was about ten years old the only trees I had ever seen were those that grew in Princes Street Gardens and I thought they were a huge forest. Yet as late as 1800 a squirrel could travel branch to branch from Caithness to Cornwall without ever touching the ground.'

Keeping the best to the almost-last: Mary Monroe bounces into print for the first time with **The Upper Room**, a Deep South story with enough grits, collard greens, ribs, beers, bibles and trouble-at-swamp to sate the most avid fan. Her Black folks living in the shanties — appropriately called 'Goons' — outside Miami get 'fussed-up' easy; white officialdom avoids the confusion and thus they welcome the monster from Shreveport, Mama Ruby, equally handy with crucifix and switchblade and her secret in the upper room. Ruby — 'I ain't never tetched nobody who ain't had it comin' — rules, murdering and laying on of healing hands as she feels fit. She dominates the book and, like all fiction's monsters, gets the best of her creator and goes on a bit too long. Nevertheless this is a vigorous, funny and gloriously unselfconscious 'sho nuff' good start.

Finally, there ought to be a moratorium on blurb-hype for first novels. Promises of 'indescribable electricity' and new voices which 'irrevocably enter your consciousness' are so over-exciting that disappointment inevitably over-shadows writing that is merely rather good. Ann Ireland's **A Certain Mr Takahashi**, a story of sisters coming to grips with their adolescent obsession with a charismatic Japanese pianist, is not, as billed, 'Extraordinary', but predictable, confidently written and 'quite good'. □

Divided they fall

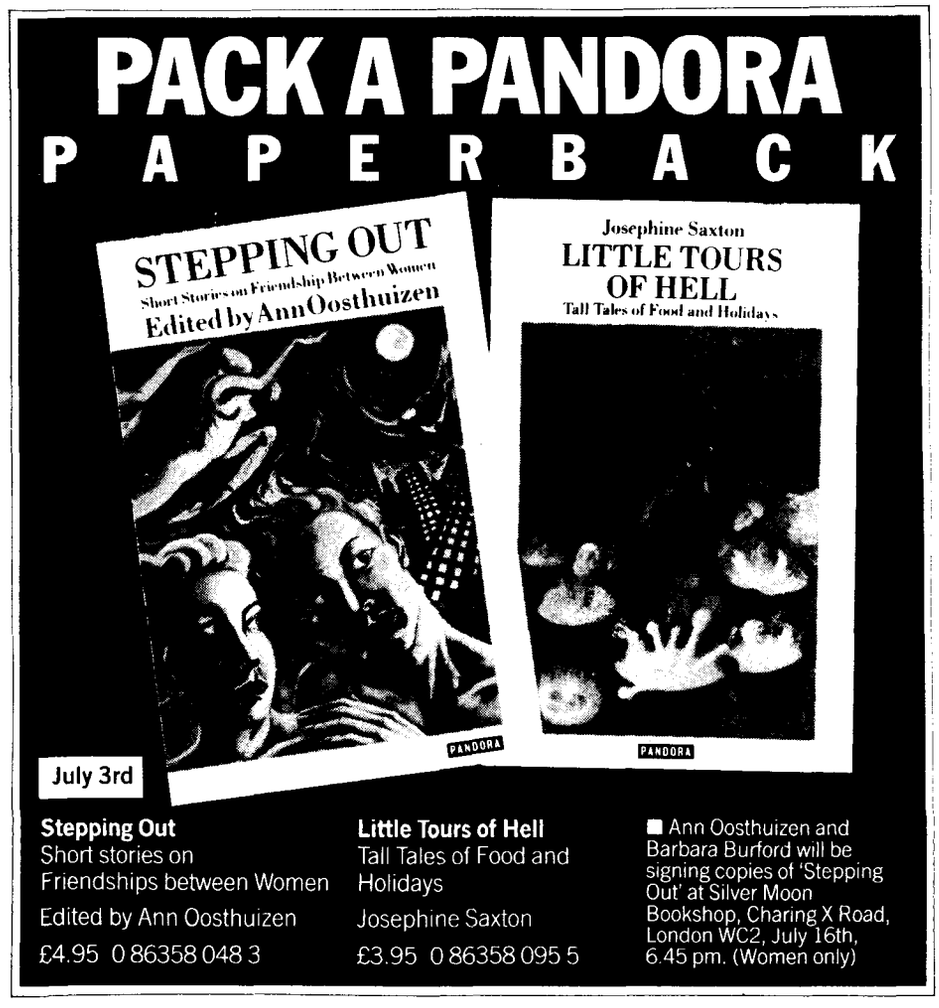
David Edgar

Prisoners of the American Dream
MIKE DAVIS *Verso* £19.95 & £7.95

BEING A SOCIALIST anywhere nowadays is no job for a softie and America's peculiarly harsh and unfriendly political climate tends to breed commensurately tough and unyielding souls.

A former meatcutter and truckdriver, Mike Davis is aware not only that the razing of the socialist forest has spread outwards from his country, but also that the ideological defoliants were manufactured, by and large, in his home state of California.

To say that his book eschews easy optimism is an understatement: Davis charts both the fact and the causes of the American rejection of even the mildest forms of social democracy, effectively demolishing the comfortable delusion (shared by Marx, Engels and Lenin, among others) that the political backwardness of the American working class was a temporary phenomenon and that, sooner or later, the exceptional barriers to class consciousness would crumble and a real, recognisable, European-type proletariat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Ann Oosthuizen and Barbara Burford will be signing copies of 'Stepping Out' at Silver Moon Bookshop, Charing X Road, London WC2, July 16th, 6.45 pm. (Women only)

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would emerge, blinking, into the light of day.

The first half of *Prisoners of the American Dream* analyses the progressive depoliticisation of the American working class, bedevilled throughout its history by ethnic and racial divsions.

Davis sees the hostility between the original, 'native' American working class and the various generations of European refugees as the cause of the failure to unite craft and industrial unionism in the Thirties — and he blames white racism for the refusal of either wing of the labour movement seriously to engage with the civil rights struggle of the post-war years.

In the second half, he maps the ruins and rubble left after the Reagan assault: in particular, he charts the terrifying speed of the shift of capital and employment from the traditional smokestack states of the Northeast to the Sunbelt, with the consequent haemorrhage in union organisation. Partly, this must be blamed on the efforts of the employers — aided and abetted by the government — to marginalise and then exclude union representation. But the virtual elimination of organised labour as a mass force in the American economy was also a direct consequence of the *laager* mentality of the union bosses (hang on like grim death to autos and steel, forget about services and hi-tech) as well as the continued and misplaced commitment of the movement as a whole to the Democratic Party as a motor for progressive change.

It is indeed a major part of Davis's project to undermine the flight of the American Left towards the Democrats as representing 'the left wing of the possible', a flight which of course parallels developments here. But, while it isn't hard to assemble evidence for the cravenness of the Democratic Left (as, indeed, it's just possible to cite the occasional failure of Labour in office), Davis's alternatives smack uncomfortably of those late Sixties theories of the inevitable incorporation of the white majority which led increasingly tiny minorities of the erstwhile anti-war movement to increasingly hysterical and indeed terrorist solutions.

Further, his polemic against the rest of the baby-boom generation (he sees the Reagan economic upswing partly as a function of mass-yuppydom) leads him into a series of dismissive side-swipes against its most significant political legacy — feminism — and at least one crack against the group at the centre of much of its activism, progressive American Jews.

That said, the book remains impressive. Despite his prejudices, Davis correctly underlines the now forgotten significance of the civil rights movement. His conclusion — that the Reagan boom was a political manoeuvre to secure the support of the speculative and service rather than the productive sector, and is bound to collapse — is closely argued and more than plausible. Most of the writing is clear and some of it is fine.

And the book itself is beautifully designed and presented, as the first in Verso's Haymarket series on the politics and history of the contemporary United States.

Footnotes

I'VE JUST received a press release promoting a new horror writer, Shaun Hutson. *Breeding Ground*, his 'stomach-churning' sequel to *Slugs*, has gone into paperback.

Shaun is billed as 'heir to the mantle of James Herbert' — accurately, perhaps, for one reliable critic has described *Breeding Ground* as the worst hardback horror novel he's ever read. No matter. What really counts — and makes this press release merely a slightly cruder form of the others which literary editors get by the sackfull every week — is Shaun's eligibility for **interview**. Forget the writing: he *looks like* a Heavy Metal rock star, has *experience* of TV and radio, is 'a very exciting talker'. Better still, forget reading: questions to ask him are supplied by the publishers, in sequence, from '1. When did you realise you had the ability to frighten people?' through to '10. What is your ultimate ambition?' Shaun's immediate ambition, for sure, is to be this week's celebrity, an ambition shared by more and more publishers, for more and more authors.

Interview-journalism is spreading as fast as Shaun's mutant gastropods, but ready-made interviews are nothing new. American bestseller Judith Krantz has been talking to herself for years: she tapes the dialogue and passes the transcript to chat-show hosts who can mimic the questions — rather like those American records of pauses-and-answers where fans ask the questions on the sleeve. Your very own half-hour with Al Green.

British publishers took a while to appreciate the marketing strategies of their American counterparts, but they're making up for lost time. Fewer editors, more publicists; more PR, more phone calls. Would I like to talk to the author of a major new novel, a definitive guide to yoga, a Foucauldian analysis of deviancy in postwar Hungary? More often than not, I, or someone, would, for ever-widening sections of the press have happily accepted their new role as an extension of advertising. With good reason, as a recent American sociology of publishing explained in relation to TV. 'The network fills a slot with an "entertainer" for whom it does not have to pay. The publishing house doesn't pay either, except to reimburse travel and hotel expenses.' And newspapers and magazines get/create a famous writer without *paying* a famous writer, while the journalists they do pay also benefit, for transcribing a tape and adding style demands far less work than writing a review, say, of the same length. Which is not to deny the skill that goes into hotel-lobby descriptions, judicious use of *italics* or post-facto rearrangement of the questions. In any case, given current wordage rates, most arts freelancers would starve without interviews. But the 1,000-word author profiles which are overrunning arts pages have nothing in common with the archaically extensive, expert interrogations of *Paris Review*: they preclude, almost inevitably, criticism and analysis. Leaving aside nostalgic moral objections to authors-as-stars, this may be a significant development.

It has often been said that certain growing trends in publishing lead to the disappearance of the author: packaging, mail-order books, 'fiction factories' for romance and other genres, film and TV tie-ins. A market is established, a concept tried and tested; more or less anonymous writers supply words to order. Non-books. But publishers still face the problem of marketing the old-fashioned kind, with authors. Unlike any other commodity, the argument used to run, each book is a new product with a new message: no publisher could afford to apply traditional research and promotion to even a small percentage of its annual list. One solution, of course, has been the series. 'Our readers perceive us as a brand of books with a special flavour and image', said an executive of the American Harlequin Romance series. 'Quality' fiction imprints, too, can construct a brand-image, given a certain homogeneity of style and subject, and we're starting to see the results. But for single books, single authors, the PR interview becomes vital.

All these strategies have simply brought publishing more solidly into line with the rest of the entertainment/information industry, as one more integrated media circuit. One consequence is further to reduce the already limited independence of the critic and cement the interdependence of publicist, pundit and journalist. The film promotes the book, the book promotes the film; the celebrity sells the magazine, the magazine sells the celebrity. A self-referential process, an unbroken circle; when advertising is ubiquitous, meaning disappears. That at least would be the view of the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard (wait for the interviews): like him, 'we might start to wonder whether the world itself only exists as publicity material in another world . . .'

●

THIS MAGAZINE still knows where to draw the line between criticism and publicity, and you've just crossed it. Journeyman Press write to tell us they plan a new book on **condoms**, based on a German bestseller. To update it they need, for some reason, the help of *NS* readers with their market research. Just send your name and address to them at 97 Ferme Park Road, London N8 and you will receive a survey form and — this is, so to speak, the come-on — free samples. Put 'NS' on the envelope and we might even get some advertising.

●

RATHER MORE urgently, we've just heard that the nine-month-old **Women's Review** — the only British arts magazine by and about women — may close unless it can raise enough money to survive the next few months. By then, its growing popularity should provide sufficient income to solve the usual cash-flow problems of new, independent magazines. Rush donations to *Women's Review*, Unit 1, 2nd Floor, 1-4 Christina Street, London EC2. A £12 donation gets you a year's sub.

Malcolm Imrie

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D-I-V-O-R-C-E

Eamonn McArdle

Despite the forecasts, Ireland last Thursday voted not *to legitimise divorce: a Dubliner witnessed the lead-up to this extraordinary turn of affairs.*

YOU CAN SEE a moving statue here any day of the week, usually in daytime, and right along O'Connell Street too — Dublin city's main thoroughfare. Forget about the trek to Ballinaspittle and spice your summer pilgrimage with the consolations of the capital.

This season's moving statue creates no embarrassment for the sceptical temper. Its profane movements are explained by the banal operation of the internal combustion engine, the one that propels the car securing the statue upright. What it is that impels the middle-aged male driver is another matter.

Here it comes, a life-sized, pale blue madonna, roped to the roof-rack, cruising along at 15 mph to show it means business. Passers-by pay no heed. The city decor appears to have robbed the sacred statue of its mystique, at least on weekdays. Torn from context the graven image is about as persuasive as a *bean sidhe* (banshee) and, in the crowded city streets, every bit as incongruous. Over the tannoy comes an extremely muffled commentary, like in the lead-up to an election. It's hard to tell what's being said. No matter: the madonna is the message. In Dublin 1986 it is certainly saying: No to Divorce.

Another middle-aged man, at the door to distribute leaflets and canvass votes, is also saying no to divorce, though without the dubious props used by the Legionnaires of Mary and the militants of Family Solidarity.

'Why bring religion into it?' he asks. 'We're discussing a change in the *law*, family law.' Do I need to add that this obtuse line of reasoning comes from a solicitor (a widely travelled man who knows what he talks about), one of the 'Lawyers Against the Amendment'?

I'm sorely tempted to cut the doorstep discussion short and tell him where to put his leaflets. Still, a friend who has been busy around the clock for the past two weeks on behalf of the Divorce Action Group has told me that it is a good idea to detain such people as long as possible. And then there is the satisfaction of contributing in some small way to the demoralisation of Catholic opinion. I manage to keep him at the door for 20 minutes, even if the tone of the conversation becomes shriller towards the end.

I remonstrate. I argue. The provisions of the 1937 Constitution forbidding divorce were enacted to consolidate the hold of the Church over the people. That's why the Church is now the main opponent of any threat to the status quo . . . 'May di-vorce be with you,' I manage to get out one of the DAG slogans (better than Labour's 'Put Compassion in the Constitution'), 'and I hope you're a good loser on 27 June'. That should rile him.

Doctor Noel Browne created a stir here last summer when he lashed the sectarian character of the Southern Irish State. The Republic, he claimed, was still ruled by 'a politico-religious authority whose secretariat, governing bodies, the whole apparatus of government with its supreme head, the Pope, lies in a faraway Italian state, the Vatican City . . . Even the regional governors here, known as bishops, are not permitted to choose their successors. This power lies in Rome . . .'

This is a refrain long made familiar by Northern Unionists. Its impact alters subtly, though, when it comes from a maverick socialist and former Minister of Health in the coalition government of a radical complexion that held office in Ireland in the late Forties and early Fifties. Noel Browne is better qualified than most to pronounce on the subject. His pioneering Mother and Child welfare scheme was scuttled by the Hierarchy because of its challenge to the Church's view on the role of the family as provider.

Browne resigned and exposed the machinations of the Hierarchy in applying pressure upon the government to drop its plans. The row has figured ever since as a major landmark in Church-State relations in Independent Ireland.

A few things have changed since then, but not many. In the Seventies and Eighties, faced with the spectre of civil rights for women or — god forbid — gays, or simply for non-Catholics and other infidels, the Church has strenuously defended its sectarian veto over the laws of the Republic.

The Church fought and lost a rearguard action to prohibit the sale of contraceptives — rubbers first became legally available to single people over 18 last year — but laws are not the only source of Church coercion: hundreds of chemists in rural areas and many in Dublin itself are still refusing to sell condoms. And three years ago the Church engineered and won a constitutional referendum that excludes for the forseeable future any chance of abortion facilities in Ireland.

But, despite this and despite the outcome of the divorce referendum, the corrosive effects of social changes on traditional morality are plain to see. In all of the recent debates Church authority has been questioned and has had to justify itself, floundering around for arguments to cover its own irrationality. Listen, for example, to the intransigent Father Denis Faul, in the Letters Page of the *Irish Times*, offering his last word to the people of the Republic on why they should vote against divorce: '. . . it would deeply disturb [the Irish] resolution to lead the good Catholic family lives that their forefathers have lead . . . despite the oppression of sectarianism from people who believe in and practice the dissolution of the marriage bond.' Or, ancestor worship, reverence for a hallowed past, spiced with a hint of Prods-Brits Out — about as impressive as a locomotive madonna in O'Connell Street. Even in Ireland, there is no future for Faul's nostalgia, for the contest of athletic youth and the laughter of comely maidens . . . □

Weekend competition

No 2931 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Forget the Hare and the Tortoise; what we need are *new* Aesop's Fables with morals suited to Thatcherite Britain. Max. 150 words by 17 July.

No 2928 **Set by Rupert Maxwell**

Newspaper and magazine headlines following the four-minute warning.

Report **By Babe Bio**

Wikkid! Brilliernt! Tackiness sutes you so well. Even lots that we haven't printed are totally groan-making buties. You make me wunder, thow, why people get all in a larther about press distorsherns, lies, etc, etc, when its obviers that you — and I'd think the hole world — know perfectly well whot a lode of wankers work in Fleet Street and thereabowts. Two quid per headline below.

Company: Make the most of your 4-minute lover
Morning Star: Russia takes decisive step to end arms race
R. J. PICKLES

Daily Mirror: Maxwell family safe
Financial Times: Futures plummet
LYNDON T. MOLE

Western Mail: Bovey Tracey man in holocaust
NOEL PETTY

Church Times: Terry Waite to fly to Moscow
FRANK DUNNILL

Screen: Ideology and extinction — discourses around 'the Bomb'
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

New Statesman: Special edition — how to get into the sewers
MARGARET ROGERS

Guardian: Wordl panci at outbarke of arw
NAOMI MARKS

Literary Review: Waugh!
WILL BELLENGER

Spare Rib: The Russian women behind the bomb
HARRISON EVERARD

Sun: Here we go, here we go, here we go
KEITH NORMAN

Amateur Photographer: Your flash filter questions answered
ALISON PRINCE

The Sowetan:
JOHN BARBER

News of the World: Brookside big names in bomb-blast bunker binge
D. A. PRINCE

London Standard: London Game — last spectacular day
GERARD BENSON

Watchtower: HA!HA!HA!
G. GOATLEY

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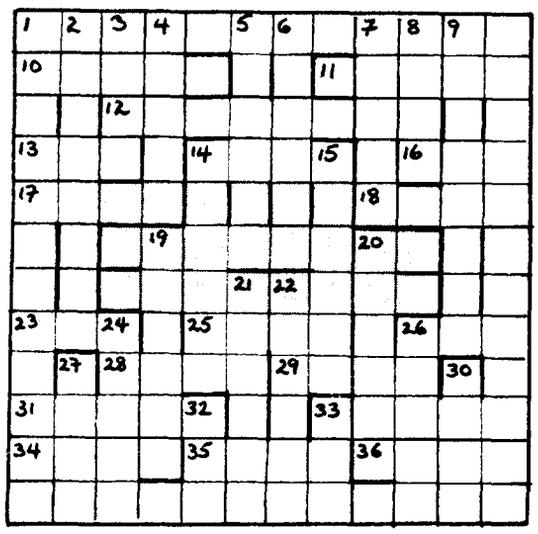
Salamanca 109

'Codiagram'

PRIZE: £35 cheque for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Salamanca 109, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 29 July 1986.



An apt and fractionally shortened ten-word quotation beginning at 1 and reading clockwise around the perimeter whose unchecked letters could have given FORM CLAN TILL WRIT in translation is linked with and has been encyphered according to a key shown by the three shaded rows which consist of a code phrase and some of the unused alphabet in order. These should be taken as given from left to right substituting A-Z and omitting J & Q. All clued answers are entered normally.

Name .....

Address .....

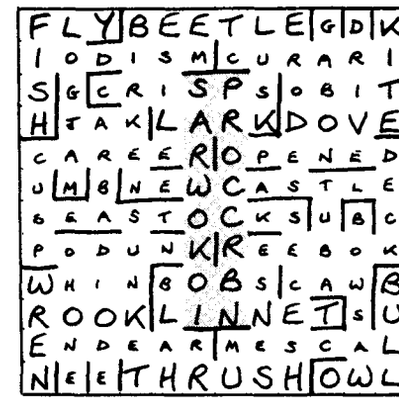
ACROSS

10 Criminal type cut by hatchet needed this item of disguise, one might say (5)
11 Fellow may have stuck in round end of finger this? (5)
12 No longer proclaim in court how Rumpole got guilty leader off (8)
13 Language of old Emperor? That can't be right (3)
14 Desire genius showed to mother (4)
16 Old character, not altogether rational (3)
17 My word! Here's some to-do at Holmes's (4)
18 Trace of corpse: it's decayed in tomb (4)
23 Spoke in verse declamatorily? (3)
25 Cutlet, say, takes an hour in oven? (4)
26 Person who's faint-hearted although not necessarily weak (3)
28 One big fellow with the energy of many? (4)
29 Train tracks (iron) once prevalent here (4)
31 Hamlet died in this first class country (5)
33 Gateway, double one, at head height (5)
34 *Do* you find this as well perhaps in a trunk that's knotty? (4)
35 Turner, possibly, would need this wood (4)
36 For getting officer reduced, writ's no longer required (4)

DOWN

2 *Not* like that Baskerville hound? (Bet a male gets savaged) (8)
3 Snapshot certainly not allowed in public showing (4)
4 Card-player: you'll see he lacks King and top trump (hearts)? (5)
5 A demon for wandering? (6)
6 Sailor: what's one likely to drink in double measure? (6)
7 Such exercises get one who's not kosher possibly standing on his head, I see (5)
8 They don't agree with one's misbehaving (4)
9 A ——, true English King's, in a bad state? Musgrave Ritual led to it (8)
14 Old champion taking alcohol, not one but forty bottles of Scotch? (6)
15 Nasty soft wart on horses, a sharp lump in some (6)
19 American has lump in throat, ergo it's painful (6)
20 This emblem you'll see oft fly nastily (6)
21 Annual value that will alter 'n' fluctuate (6)
22 You might find King inside here if he's properly entombed (6)
24 Varied treatment required when heart's died (5)
26 She put on a wader (5)
27 Bone of intrinsically powerful nature (4)
30 Thin layer of mist (4)
32 White garment should be long though cut short (3)
33 Jock's to perform some weight lifting (3)

Solution to Salamanca 108



'Who killed Cock Robin? I, said the Sparrow'; suspects are other characters from the verse found in the *Oxford Book of Nursery Rhymes*

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SUN 6 JULY

SOCIALIST — ZIONIST GROUP MAPAM. HARRY SCHWARZ, MP for South Africa's Federal Progressive Party: 'Which Way South Africa — And Its Jews?' 8 pm, 37A Broadhurst Gardens, NW6.

MON 7 JULY

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CHESS

IN ANNOTATIONS to a game you often read that one player has 'the advantage of two bishops'. Does that mean that bishops are stronger than knights? They can be, but knights can also be stronger than bishops, depending on the pawn structure, available outposts, and other pieces present on the board. 'Good knight' against 'bad bishop' (i.e., a bishop obstructed by its own pawns) is a common type of advantage that provides the key to understanding a number of opening schemes.

Of all openings the one that most dependably features confrontations between knights and bishops is Chigorin's Defence to the Queen's Gambit. Here is a classic example of Chigorin beating the bishop pair with his two knights:

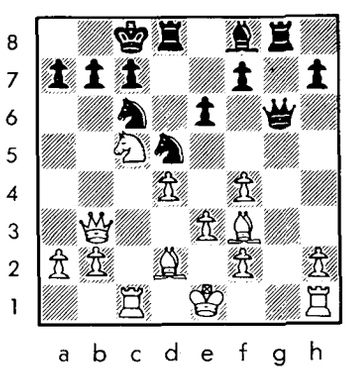
Burn-Chigorin, Berlin 1897.
1. d4 d5 2. c4 Nc6 3. Nf3 Bg4 4. e3 e6 5. Nc3 Bb4 All set to unload his bishops! **6. Qb3 Bxf3 7. gxf3 Nge7 8. Bd2 0-0 9. a3 Bxc3 10. Bxc3 Rab8 11. Rhg1 Ng6 12. 0-0-0 Qd6 13. Rg3 dxc4 14. Qxc4 b5!** Because White's pawns are split into 3 islands he has no really safe place for his king. Chigorin exploits this by opening the b-file for his rooks. **15. Qc5 b4 16. axb4 Nxb4 17. Bc4** Perhaps White should have settled for 17. Qxd6 cxd6 18. Bxb4 Rxb4 19. Bd3 Ne7, though the weak pawn on b2 would be a target. **Rb6 18. Rdg1 Rfb8 19. Kd2** Why not a bit of aggression with 19. h4? **Qd7 20. Ra1 a6 21. Ke2 Rc6 22. Qa7 Qc8!** With two threats: . . . Rxc4 and . . . Ra8. **23. Bxb4 Rxc4 24. Bc5 Ra8 25. Qxa8 Qxa8 26. Kd3 Ne5 + 27. Ke2 Nd7 0-1.**

The Chigorin Defence rarely produces a dull game, but it has never been accepted as fully respectable. Perhaps the next game will do something to change that. The kings take up different residences, but again White has problems with his split pawns.

Karpov-Miles, Bugojno 1986.
1. Nf3 d5 2. d4 Nc6 3. c4 Bg4 4. cxd5 Bxf3 5. gxf3 Qxd5 6. e3 e6 6 . . . e5 7. Nc3 Bb4 8. Bd2 Bxc3 9. bxc3 exd4 10. cxd4 Nge7 is standard theory, but Miles wants to try something different. **7. Nc3 Qh5!? 8. f4 Qxd1 +** Black could also play 8 . . . Qh4. However, the exchange of queens doesn't mean that a quiet game is in prospect. **9. Kxd1 0-0-0 10. Bd2 Nf6 11. Bb5 Ne7 12. Ke2 Nf5 13. Rac1 Be7 14. Bd3 Kb8 15. Rhg1 g6 16. Na4 h6 The idea is to prepare . . . g6-g5 in order to open the h-file.** 17. Nc5 Rhg8 18. Nb3 g5 19. fxg5 hxg5 20. h3 Ne8 21. Be4 Ned6 22. Bg2 Bf6 23. Nc5 Kc8 24. Ba5 b6 25. Na6 Rd7 26. Bb4 e5 27. Bc6 Re7 28. dxe5 Bxe5 29. Rc2 f6 30. a4 Rh8 Whilst Miles goes after the isolated h-pawn Karpov is planning a mating attack: open the a-file and then Ra1-a8. **31. a5 Rxh3 32. axb6 axb6 33. Ra1 Bxb2!** A well-timed blow which enables the knights to get to grips with White's king. The first point is 34. Rxb2 Nd4+ and Nxc6. **34. Rd1 Rexe3 + ! 35. fxe3 Rh2 + 36. Kd3 Rxc2 37. Kxc2 Nxe3 +** There goes White's last pawn. The net result of Black's combinative liquidation is that he has 4 pawns for a piece. **38. Kxb2 Nxd1 + 39. Kc1 Nf2 40. Kd2 Ng4** Miles claimed that 40 . . . Nc4+ would have given him winning chances. If that is so, then Karpov's last move before the time-control should have been 40. Bxd6. **41. Bxd6 cxd6 42. Nb4 f5 43. Nd5 Ne5 44. Bb5 Kd8 45. Ke3 Ng6 46. Kd4 Nf4 47. Nxf4 gxf4 48. Bd3 Ke7 49. Bxf5 Kf6 50. Ke4 Kg5 51. Bd7 d5 + ½-½.**

Problem

Black to play. How can he force a draw?



Solution

1 . . . Qg1 + ! 2. Rxg1 Rxg1 + 3. Ke2 Nf4 + ! 4. exf4 Nxd4 + 5. Ke3 Nf5 + 6. Ke2 Not 6. Ke4? Rd4 + 7. Ke5 Bg7 mate. **Nd4 +** and draws by perpetual check. From **Berezin-Zhuravlev, USSR 1958,** which started out as a Chigorin Defence.

George Botterill

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WELCOME TO CLERKENWELL

Clerkenwell is a uniquely attractive place in which to work, to live, or to visit. Rising above the valley of the River Fleet (now Farringdon Street), only ten minutes' walk from St Paul's or the Barbican, it is still a thriving creative village in its own right, yet with a thousand years of vivid history.

From the medieval Clerks Well, and Order of St John; the lovely church of St James on the site of the original nunnery of St Mary's; the Old Middlesex Sessions House (with its network of nearby prisons, cells and passages) dominating Clerkenwell Green scene of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*; Lenin's room in the Marx Memorial Library; to the many new specialised craft workshops, professional firms, the national newspapers and periodicals and international charities that work in the area today together with nearby Smithfield Meat Market, Hatton Garden Jewel Centre and Sadlers Wells.

THE CLERKENWELL FESTIVAL, FRIDAY 11 JULY TO SUNDAY 20 JULY makes this heritage accessible by an "open house" week, with exhibitions, guided tours and events.

TWO HIGHLIGHT WEEKENDS

Sat 12 July SUPERBIKE. Continental style Round-the-Houses Cycle Time Trial; plus Streamlined Human Power Vehicles display; the return of the Trike; Demonstration by English professional BMX Display team, followed by clinic; local tours organised by the London Cycle Campaign; etc.

Sun 13 July GRAND FAMILY DICKENSIAN STREET FAIR AND CHARITY MARKET. Charity and craft stalls, costume competitions, street entertainment, children's funfair, etc.

Sat 19 July POPULAR MUSIC FOR A HOT SUMMER'S DAY. Chart bands contribute to a donation concert in aid of the "Inner City Action on Drugs". To be held at the new Turnmill Development conversion of the old Booth's warehouses. Organised in conjunction with *City Limits* magazine.

Sun 20 July PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL. From the Italian Church of St Peter, Clerkenwell. The 101st anniversary of this world famous occasion around the streets of "Little Italy", followed by a sagra or fete.

'SUPERMAC & FRIENDS'

Nothing Changes

— an exhibition of original cartoons by **Vicky** which were published in **New Statesman** 1955-1966, shows how little the world has changed — only the main characters. **Pennybank Gallery, St John's Square** — runs throughout the festival.

Plus

Lunchtime concerts, street entertainment, folk, jazz, poetry, exhibitions, lectures, walks, pub events, children's events . . .

NS Competition readings 14 July, City Pride, Farringdon Lane, EC1.

Further information: **Jim Lagden, Festival Centre,**
Old Sessions House, Clerkenwell Green, London EC1
Tel: 01-608 1318

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